

HICKMAN • DRAGOTTA • WALTA • ARAÚJO

TM



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+ MARTEGOCIA

VOL
4

MARVEL

SUPERSTAR WRITER JONATHAN HICKMAN BIDS FAREWELL TO *FF!*

In a story that kicks off in Spider-Man and Human Torch's bathroom (!), the Future Foundation explores the farthest reaches of the Marvel Universe — from Wakanda to the Negative Zone — encountering the Wizard, the Universal Inhumans and the Negative Zone's dark overlord himself, Annihilus, along the way! And in the heartwarming conclusion to Hickman's run, Old Franklin teaches Young Franklin "How To Be a God!"



"JONATHAN. FREAKING. HICKMAN. (9.5 OUT OF 10. AMAZING.)"

— Joshua Yehl, *IGN.com*

"[NICK DRAGOTTA'S] OLD-SCHOOL, DITKO-INFLUENCED ART STYLE MAKES THIS STORY LOOK LIKE IT COULD HAVE BEEN FROM THE SWINGIN' SIXTIES."

— David Pepose, *Newsarama.com*

T+

MARVEL

Collecting *FF* #17-23 — written by Jonathan Hickman; and illustrated by Nick Dragotta, Gabriel Hernandez Walta and André Araújo.

HICKMAN • DRAGOTTA • WALTA • ARAÚJO



VOL
4

MARVEL

MARVEL

17

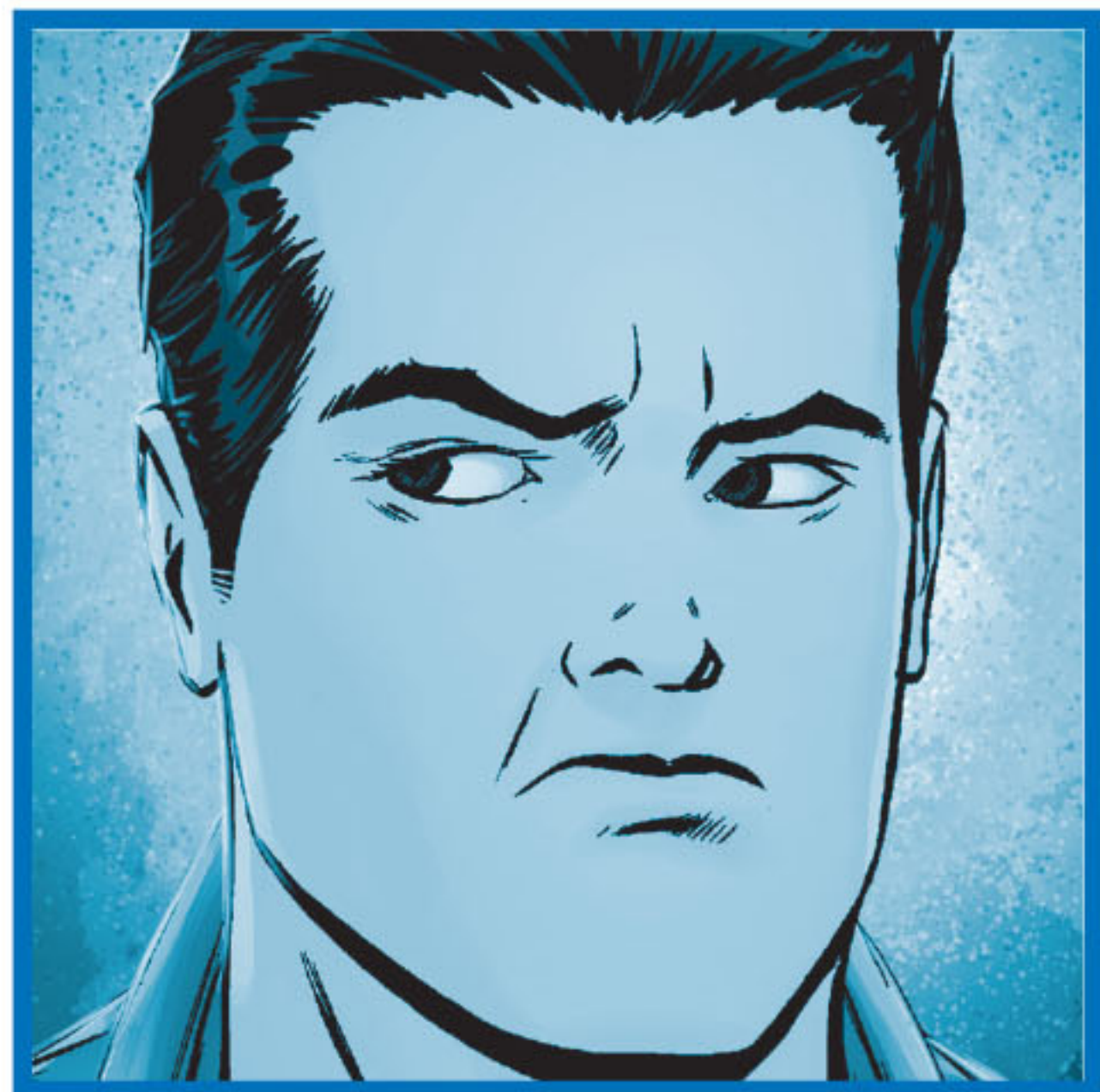


IN A LAST STAND IN THE EXTRADIMENSIONAL **NEGATIVE ZONE**, **JOHNNY STORM**, **THE HUMAN TORCH**, APPEARED TO PERISH IN BATTLE WITH **ANNIHILUS**.
INSTEAD, HE WAS RESURRECTED IN ANNIHILUS' **SLAVE-PITS**, WHERE HE EARNED THE RESPECT OF THE LEGENDARY **LIGHT BRIGADE OF THE UNIVERSAL INHUMANS**.
TOGETHER, THE TORCH AND THE LIGHT BRIGADE OVERTHREW ANNIHILUS' REIGN AND RETURNED TO **EARTH**.
BUT NOW JOHNNY NEEDS A PLACE TO LIVE--AND WHAT BETTER PLACE THAN WITH HIS FRIEND AND TEAMMATE **PETER PARKER**, THE AMAZING **SPIDER-MAN**?

"THE ROOMMATE EXPERIMENT"



JOHNNY STORM
THE HUMAN TORCH



PETER PARKER
SPIDER-MAN

WRITER: **JONATHAN HICKMAN**

ARTIST: **NICK DRAGOTTA**

COLOR ARTIST: **CHRIS SOTOMAYOR**

LETTERER: **VC's CLAYTON COWLES**

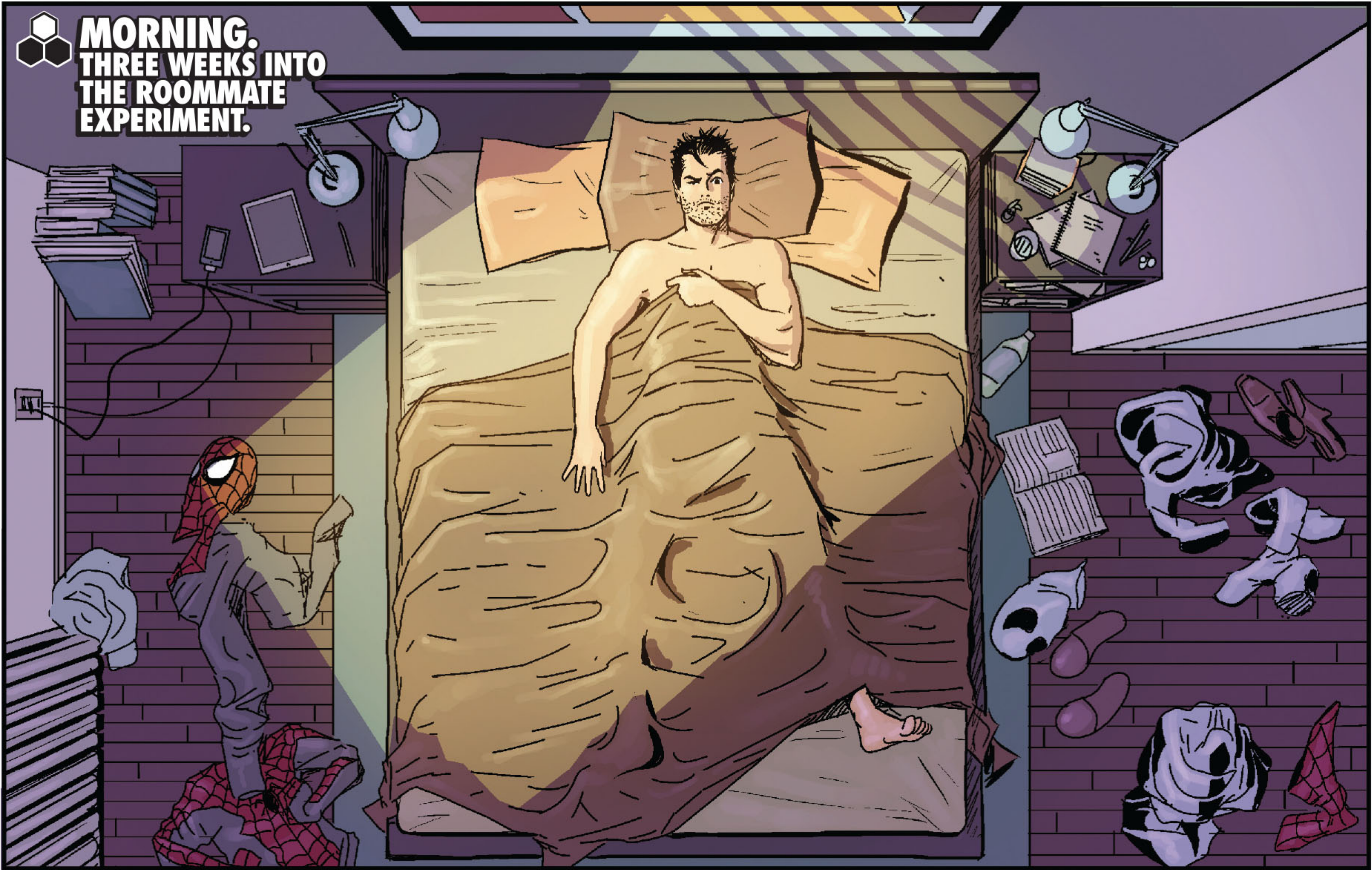
COVER ARTISTS: **MIKE CHOI & GURU eFX**

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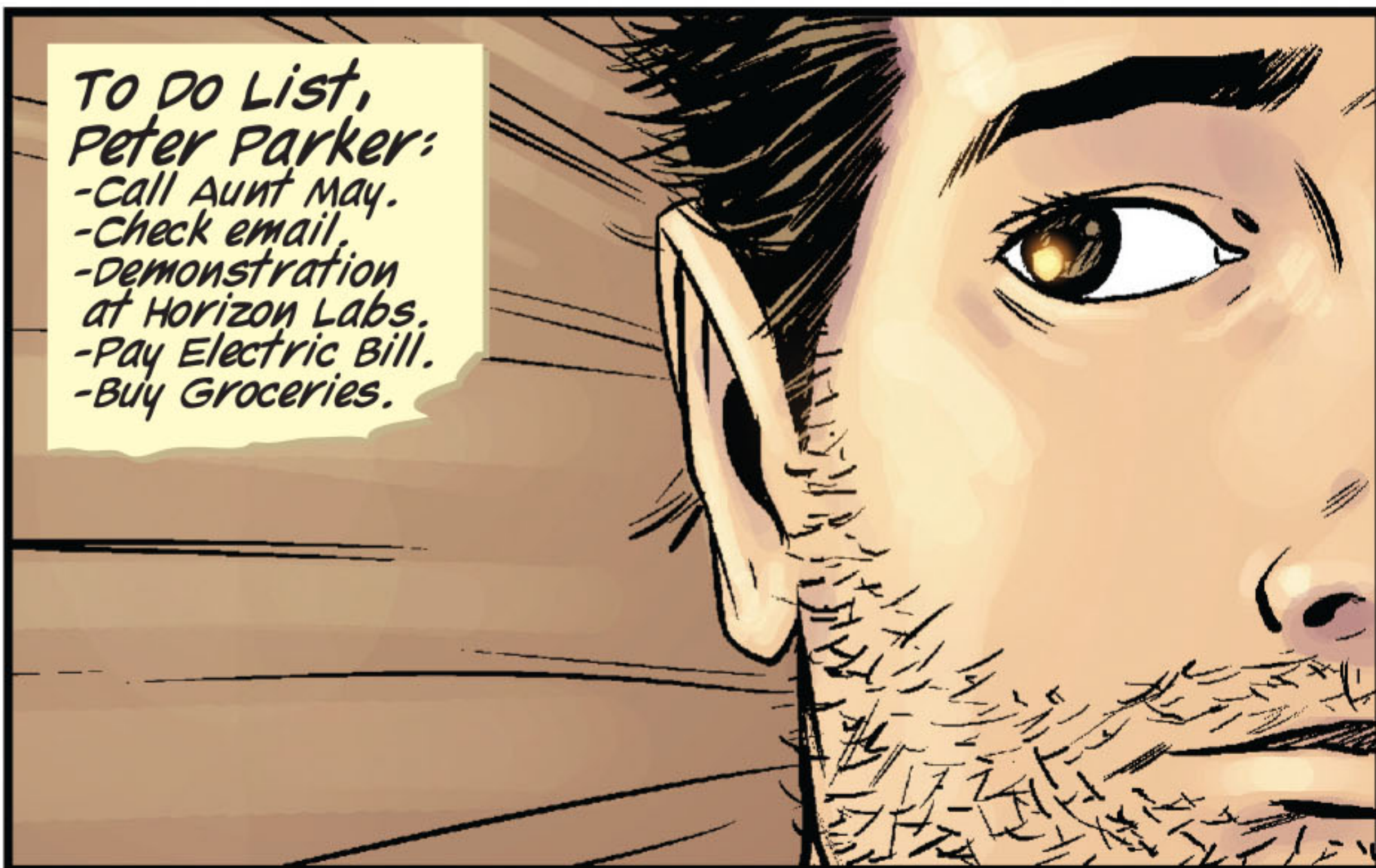
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EDITOR IN CHIEF: AXEL ALONSO
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MORNING.
THREE WEEKS INTO
THE ROOMMATE
EXPERIMENT.

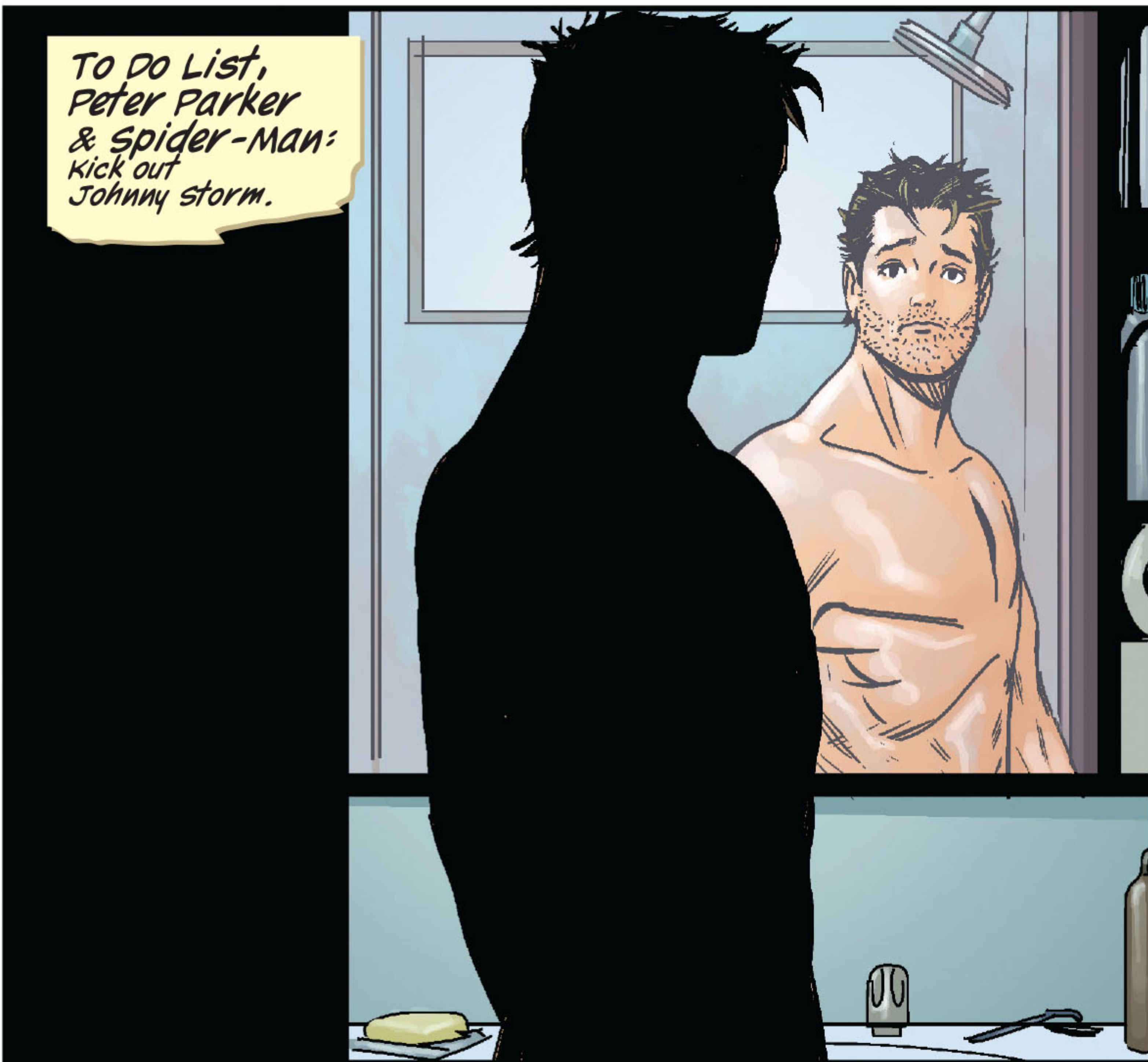
*To Do List,
Peter Parker:*
-Call Aunt May.
-Check email.
-Demonstration
at Horizon Labs.
-Pay Electric Bill.
-Buy Groceries.



*To Do List,
Spider-Man:*
-Fight crime.
-Don't let anyone die.

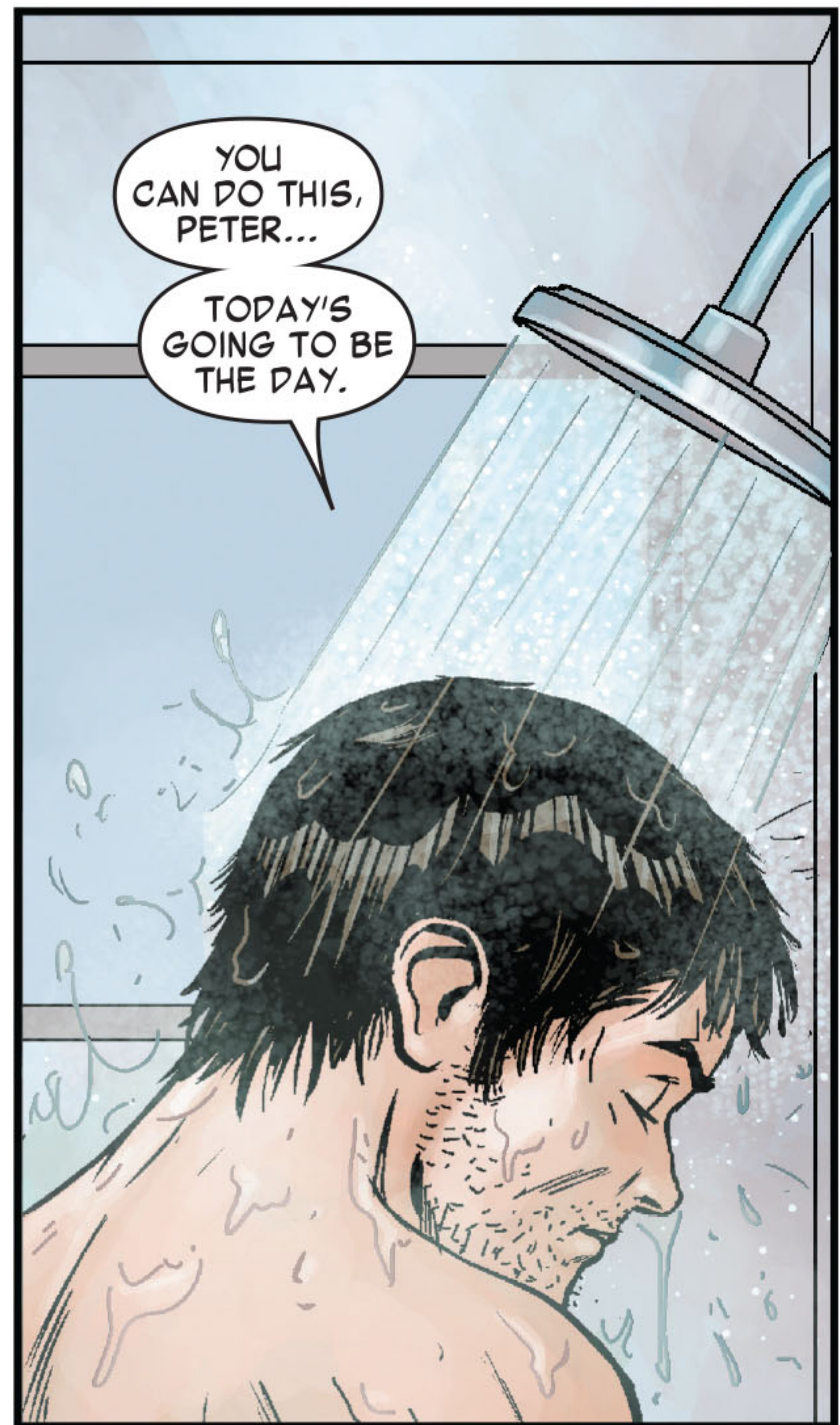


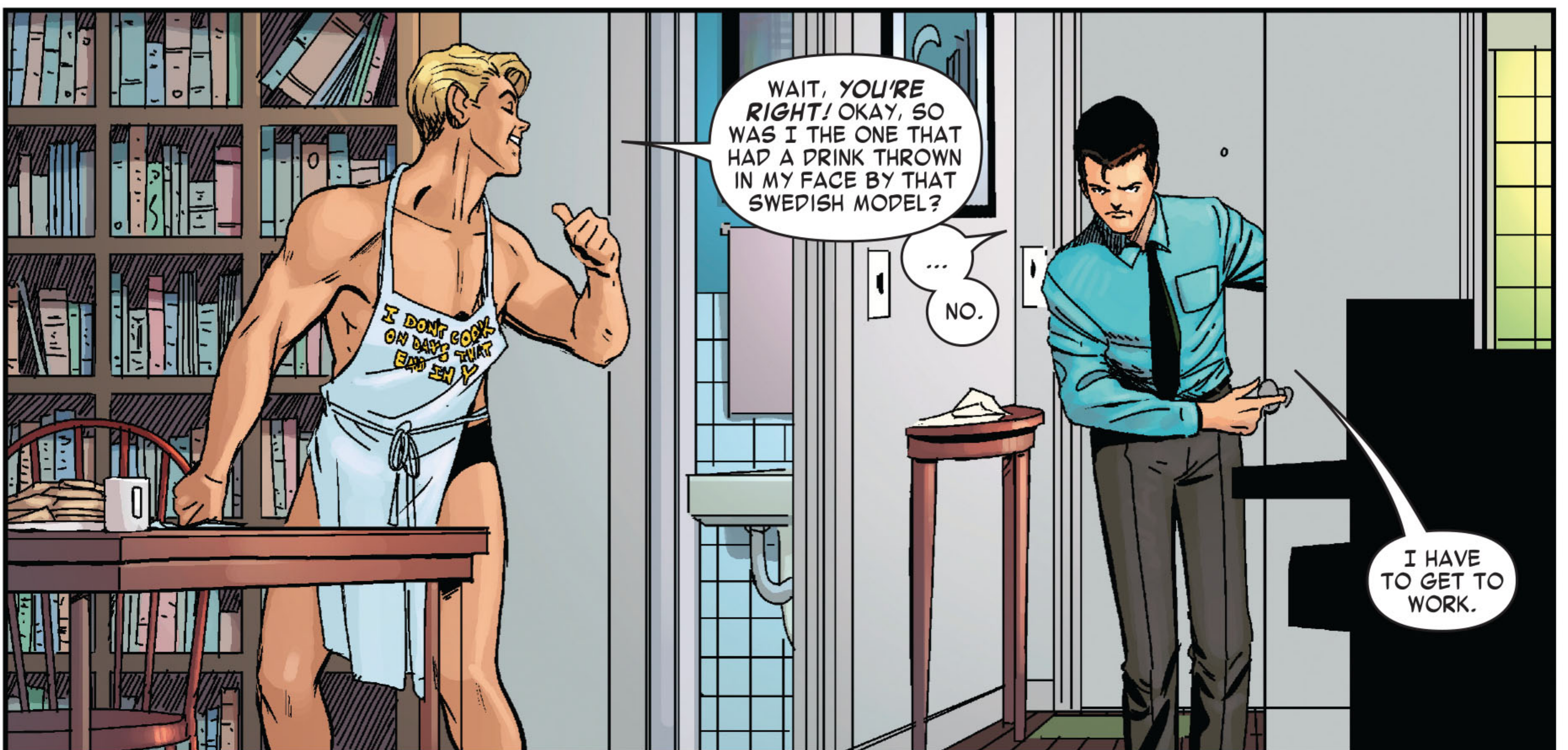
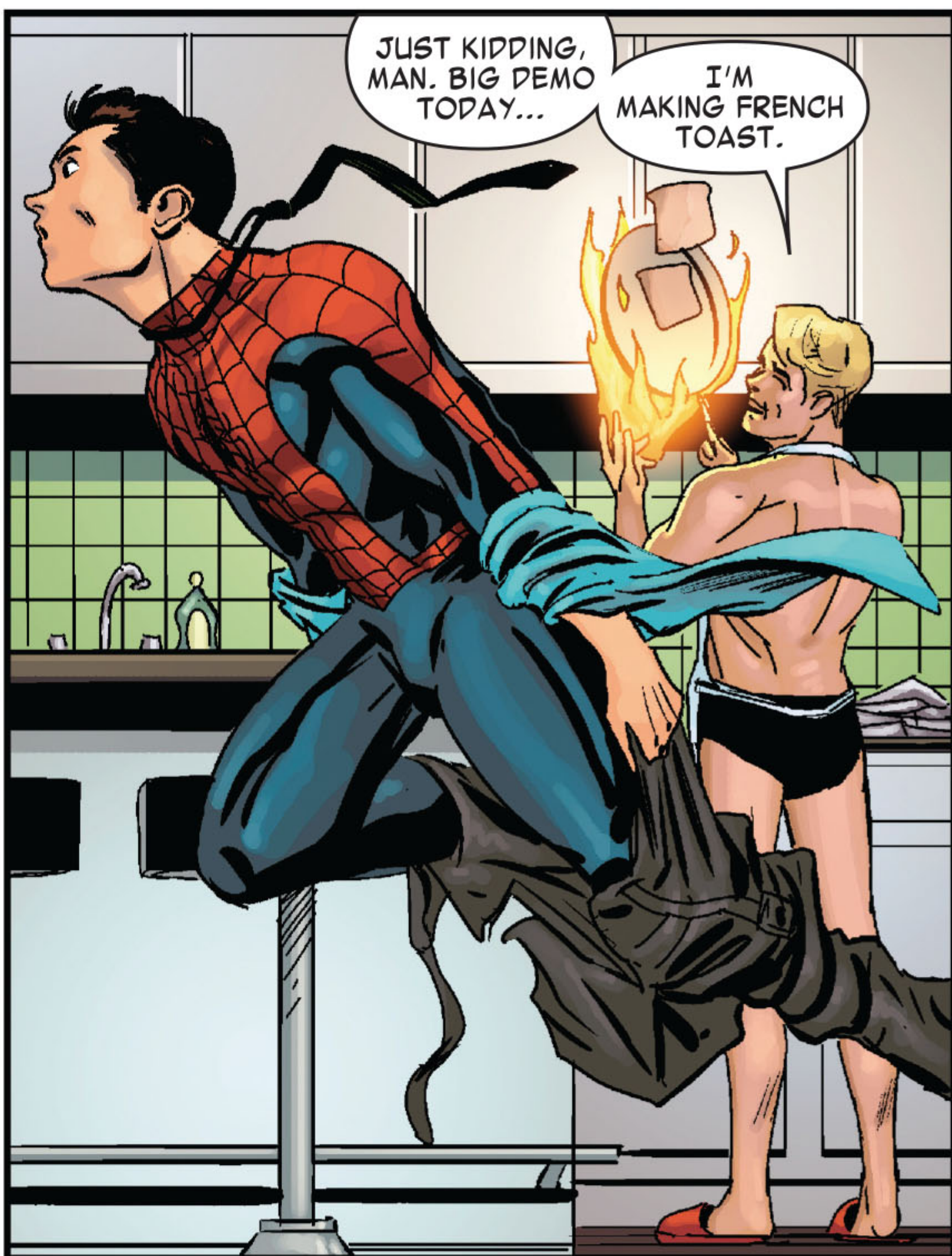
*To Do List,
Peter Parker
& Spider-Man:*
Kick out
Johnny Storm.

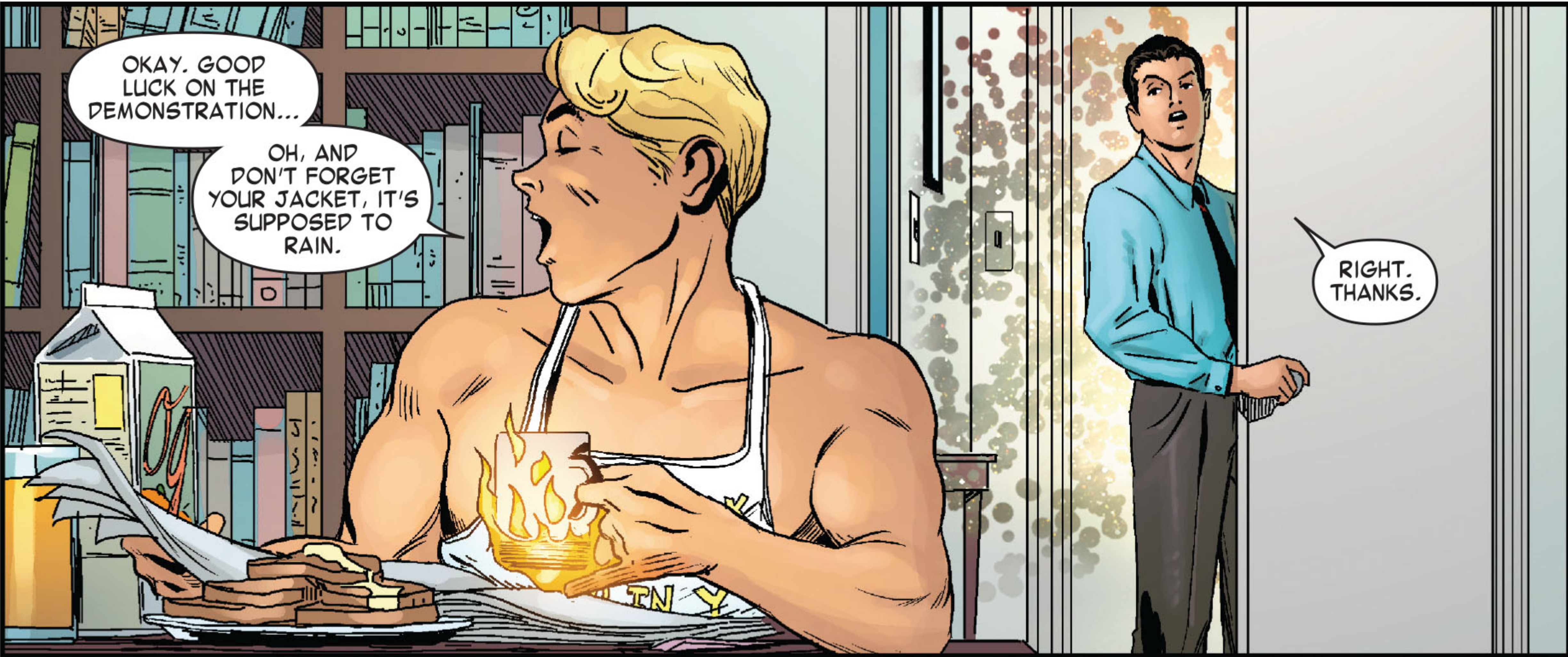


YOU
CAN DO THIS,
PETER...

TODAY'S
GOING TO BE
THE DAY.









크크크크크크크크



GREAT.

NOW I'M
GOING TO BE
LATE.



크크크크크크크크

THEN AGAIN...
I COULD USE THIS
TIME TO WORK THROUGH
SOME OF MY CURRENT
RESENTMENT AND
REPPRESSED ANGER
ISSUES.

WHY KEEP
THINGS BOTTLED
UP...



HEY...
BUGS!



BACK
AWAY FROM
THE NERD.

YOU WANT
TO TELL ME WHEN
YOU DECIDED TO MAKE
THE CLOSET INTO
A PORTAL TO THE
NEGATIVE ZONE?

REED
PUT THAT IN A
COUPLE DAYS AGO.
REMEMBER...
I TOLD
YOU.

NO, YOU DIDN'T!
I THINK I WOULD HAVE
MADE A MENTAL NOTE OF
"THERE'S A TERRIFYING, SUPER-
DANGEROUS, POSSIBLY LETHAL
UNIVERSE BEHIND THIS DOOR--
**DON'T GO IN
THERE!"**

YOU'RE
RIGHT...MAYBE
WE SHOULD GET
A SIGN.

YOU
THINK?

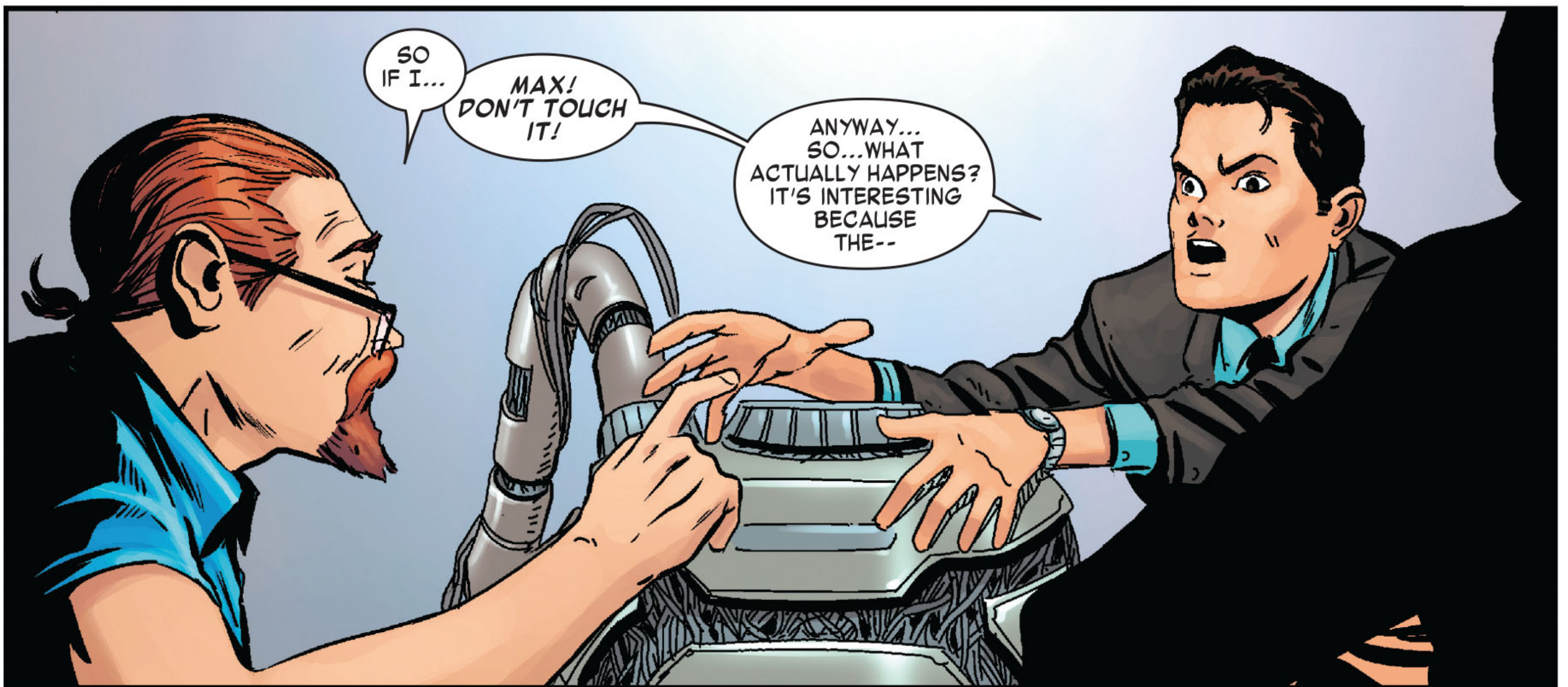
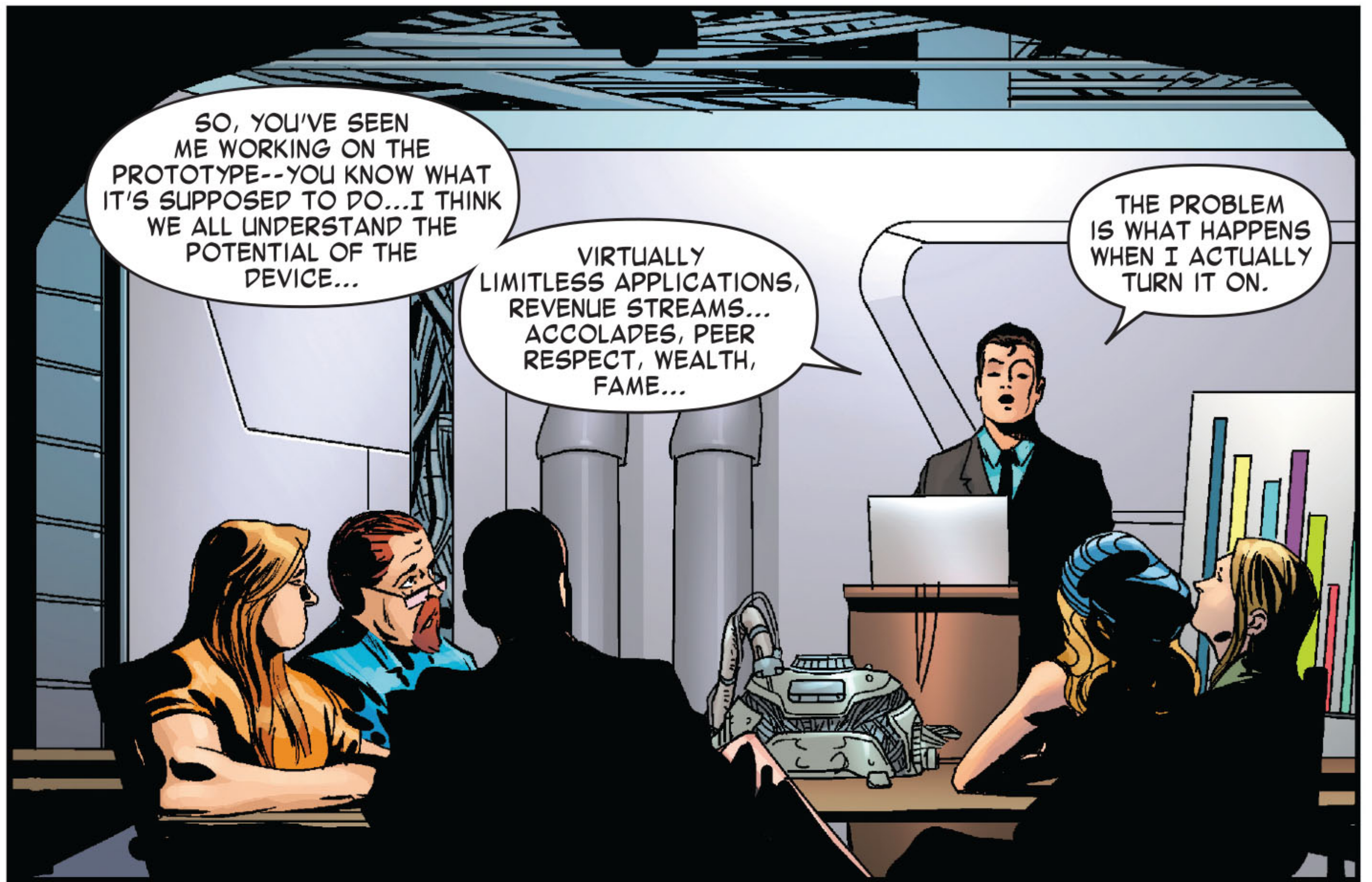
YES. IT
SHOULD READ:
LOOK! COATS GO
ON THE COAT
RACK.

NOW
HURRY...

YOU'RE PROBABLY
GOING TO BE LATE
FOR WORK NOW.

SLAM

To Do List,
Peter Parker
& Spider-Man:
-Kick out
Johnny Storm!





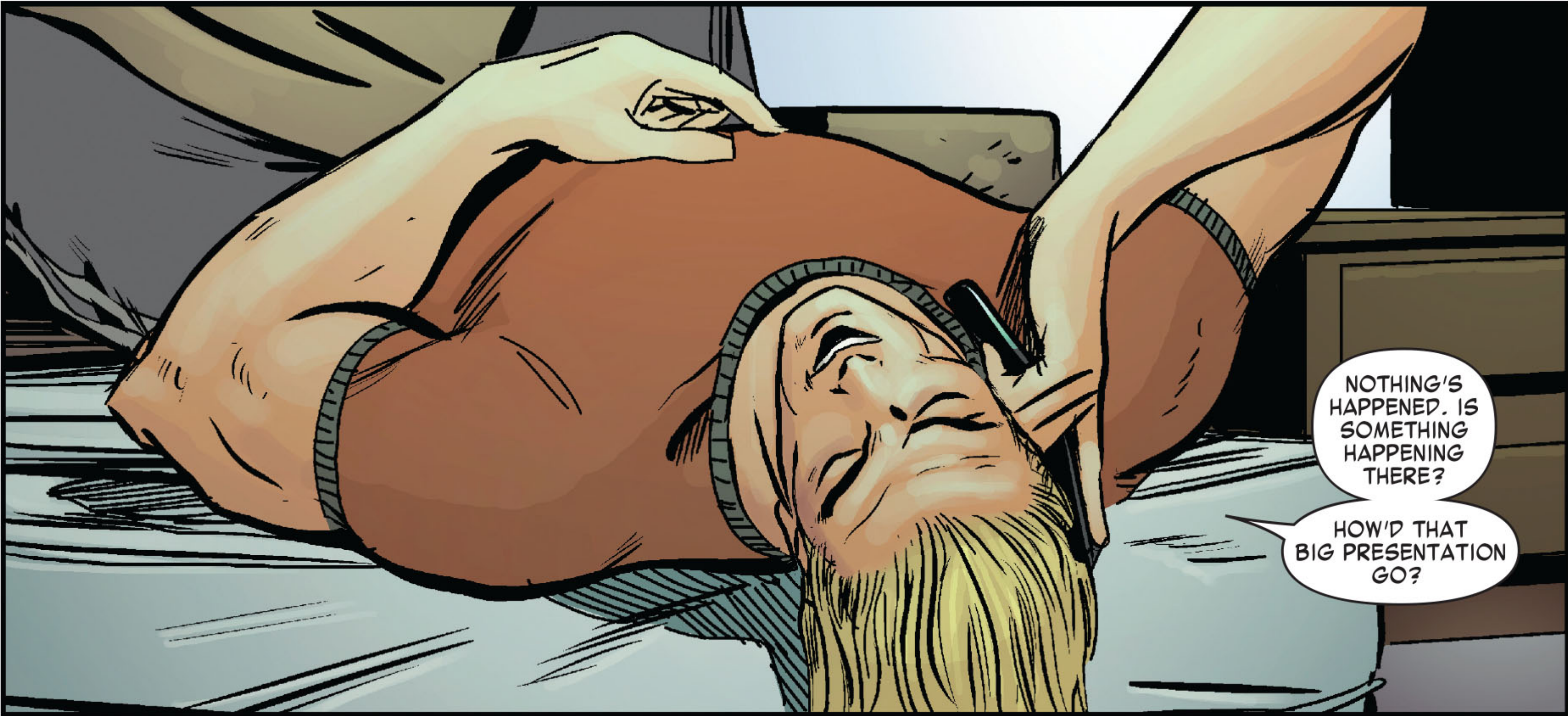
UH...
I APOLOGIZE,
EVERYONE...I'M
EXTREMELY
SORRY...

PLEASE
EXCUSE ME FOR
A SECOND.



YES.

WHAT'S
HAPPENED?!



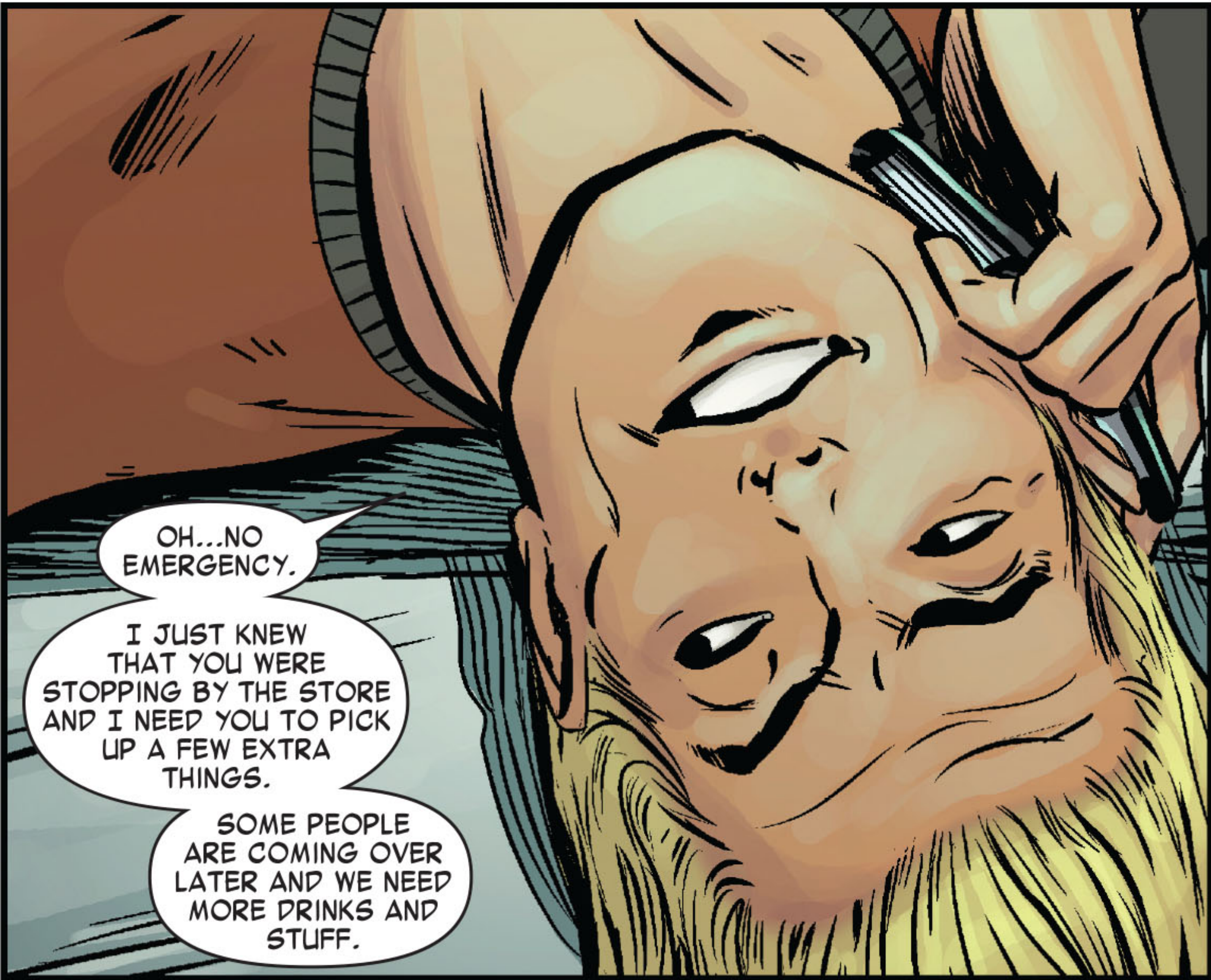
NOTHING'S
HAPPENED. IS
SOMETHING
HAPPENING
THERE?

HOW'D THAT
BIG PRESENTATION
GO?



STILL
GOING.

JOHNNY!
WHAT'S THE
EMERGENCY?



OH...NO
EMERGENCY.

I JUST KNEW
THAT YOU WERE
STOPPING BY THE STORE
AND I NEED YOU TO PICK
UP A FEW EXTRA
THINGS.

SOME PEOPLE
ARE COMING OVER
LATER AND WE NEED
MORE DRINKS AND
STUFF.

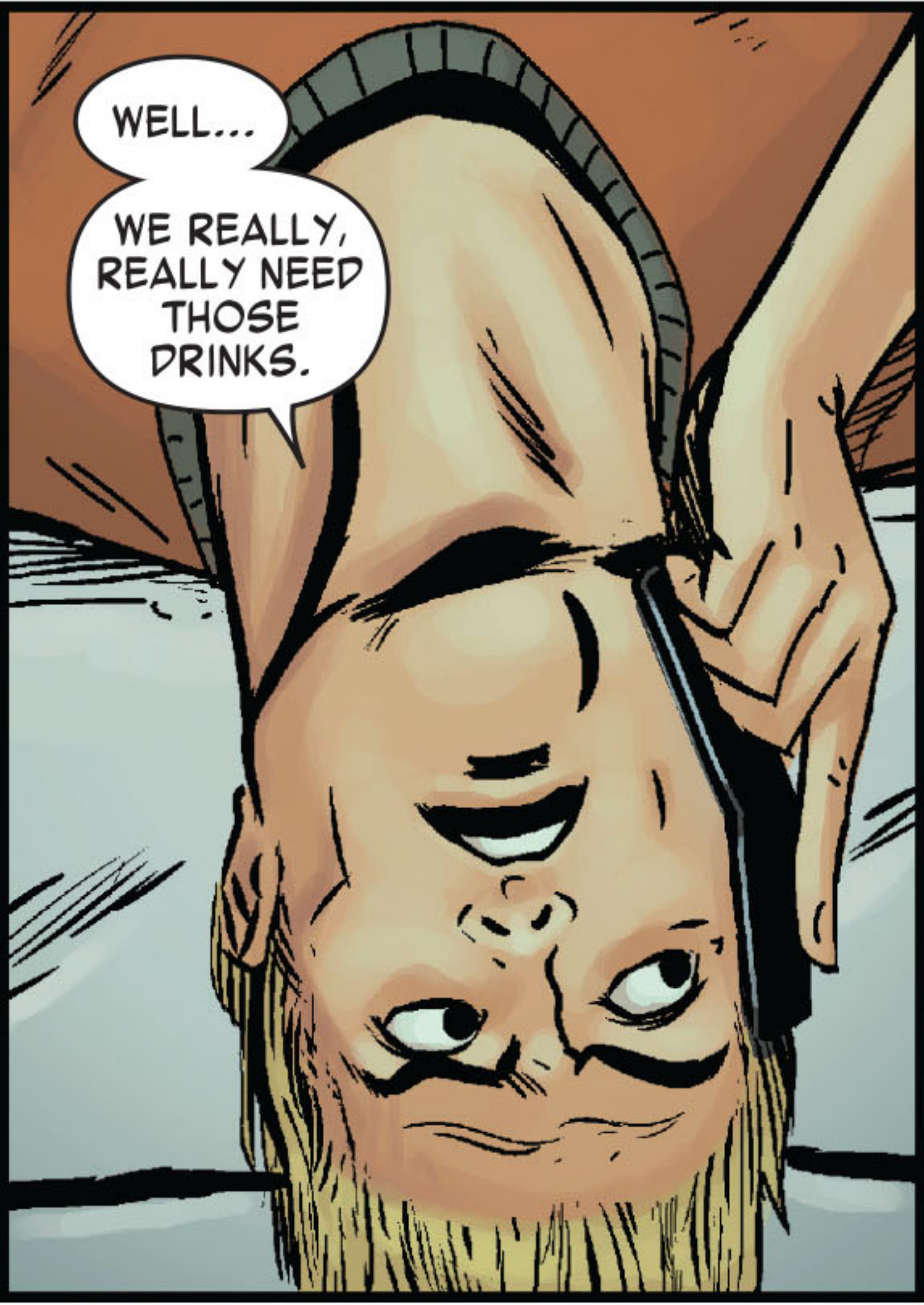


ARE YOU KIDDING ME?!

WHY ARE YOU YELLING?

THIS IS THE EMERGENCY NUMBER FOR WORLD-ENDING DISASTERS. YOU KNOW...THE EMERGENCY NUMBER FOR **EMERGENCIES!**

DO YOU UNDERSTAND THAT?!



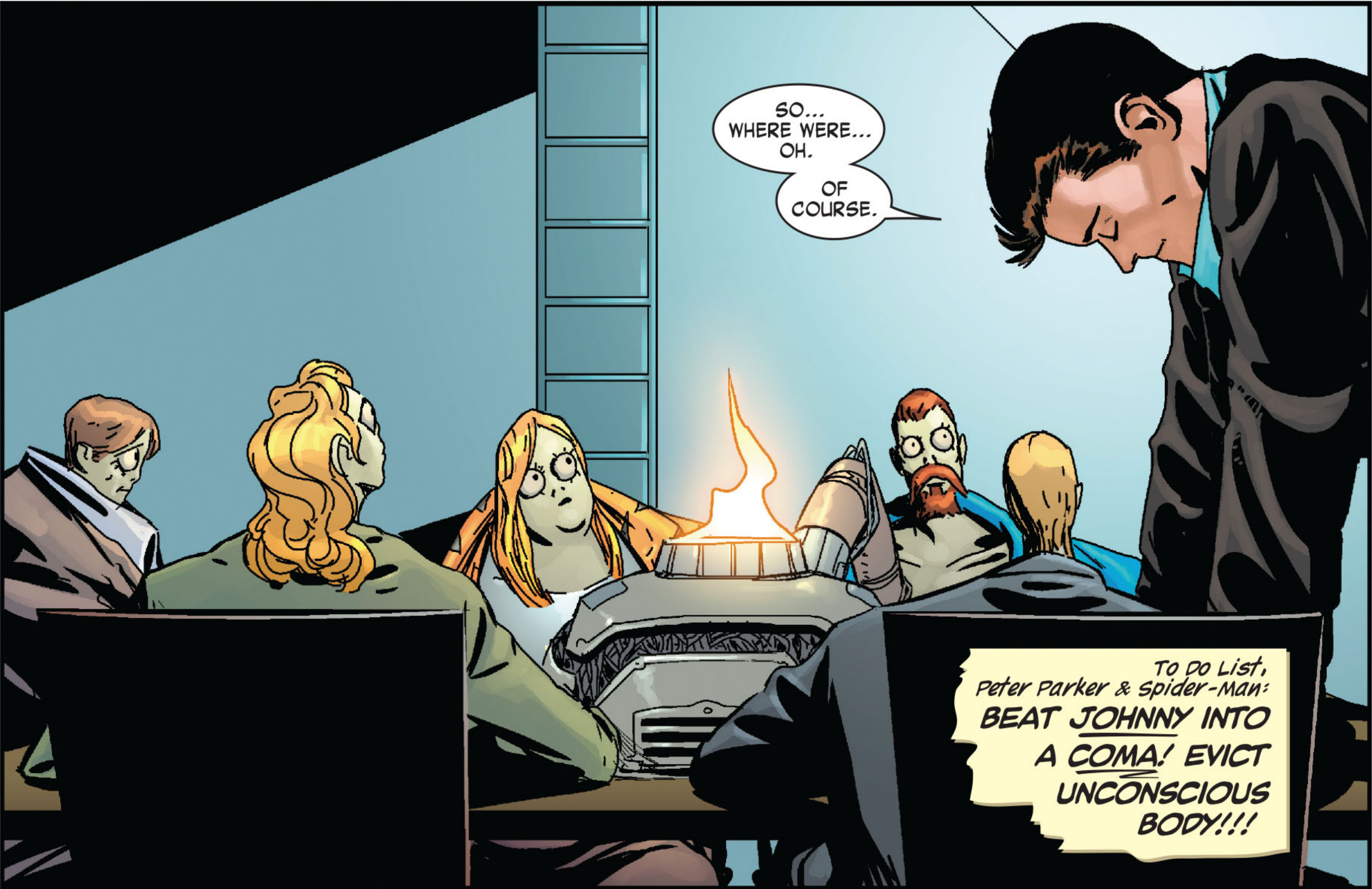
WELL...

WE REALLY, REALLY NEED THOSE DRINKS.



GOOD.

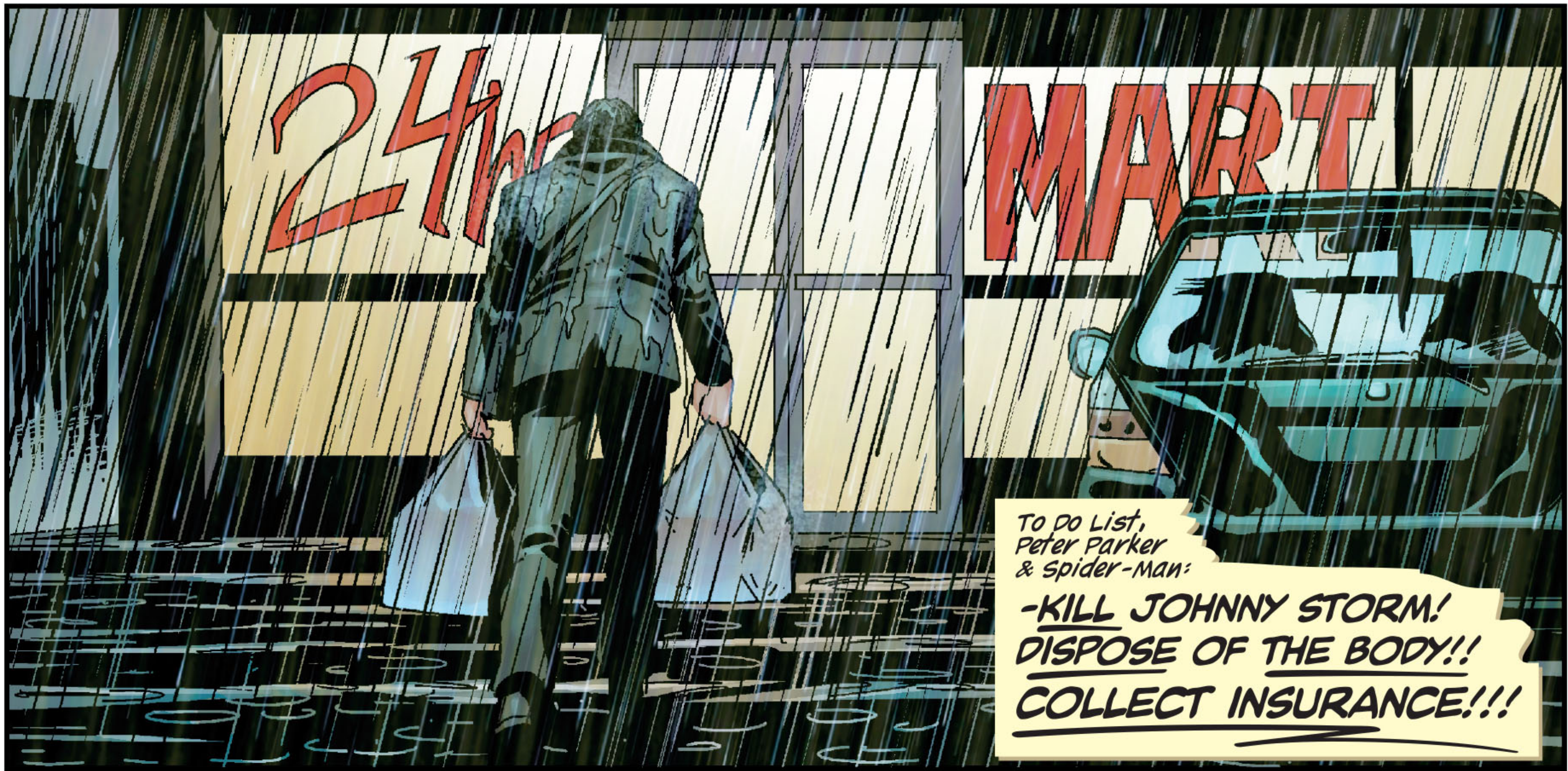
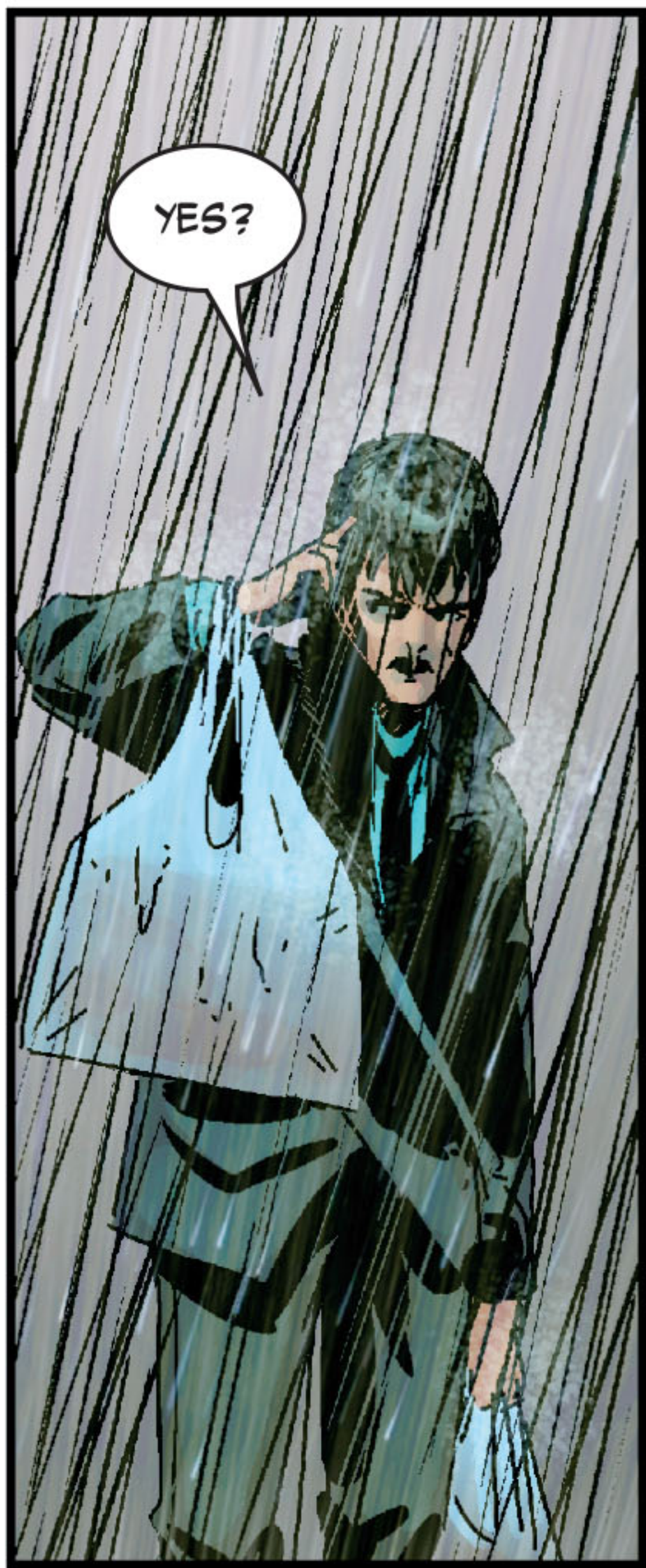
BYE!



SO... WHERE WERE... OH.

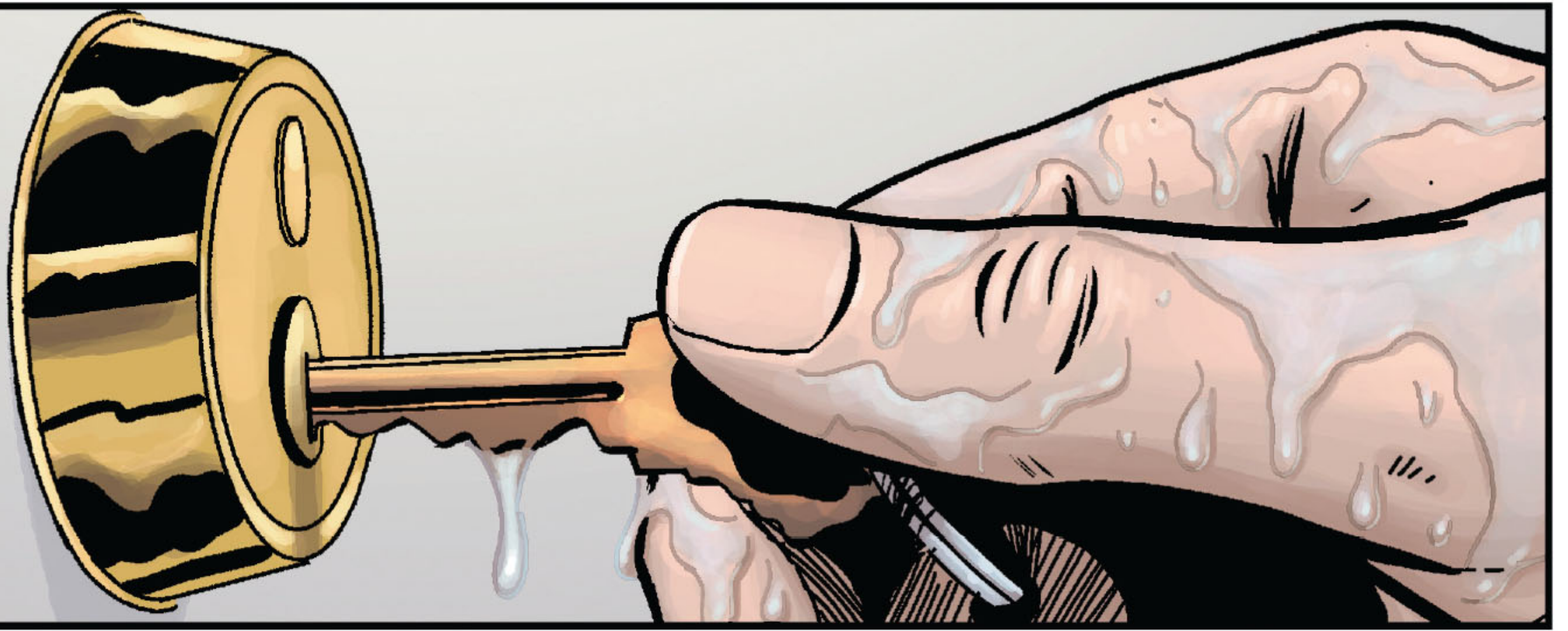
OF COURSE.

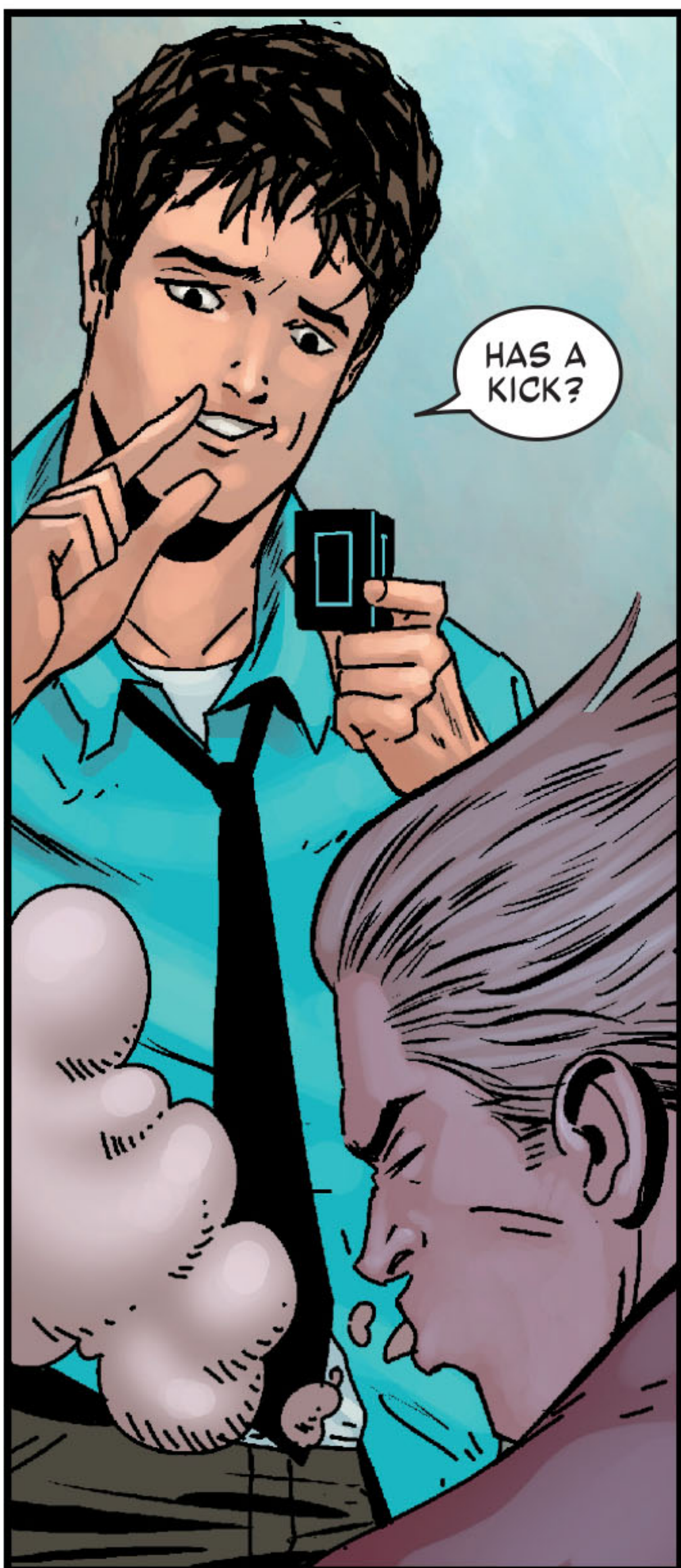
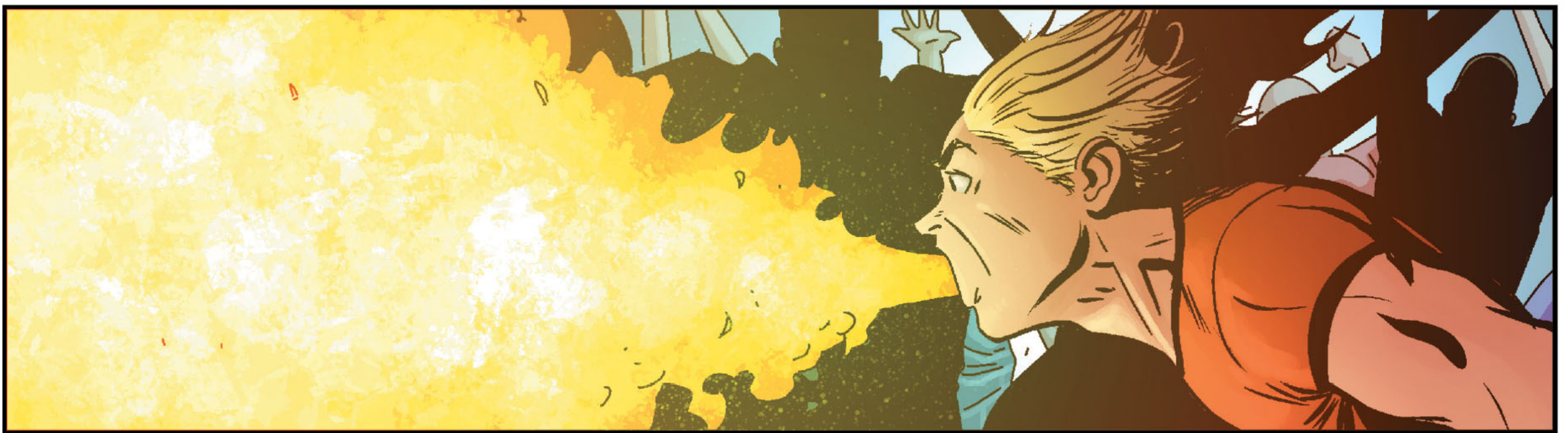
To Do List,
Peter Parker & Spider-Man:
**BEAT JOHNNY INTO
A COMA! EVICT
UNCONSCIOUS
BODY!!!**

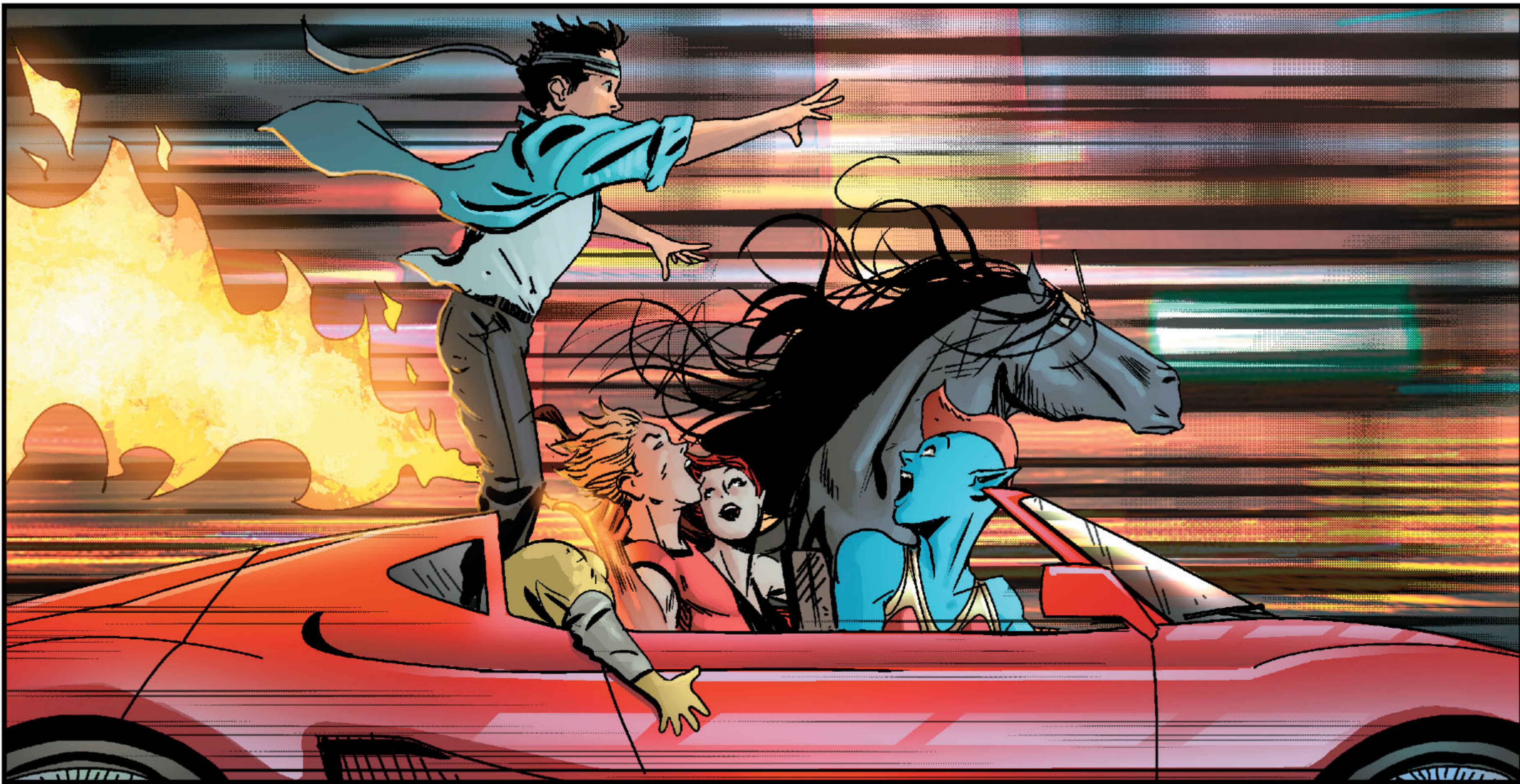


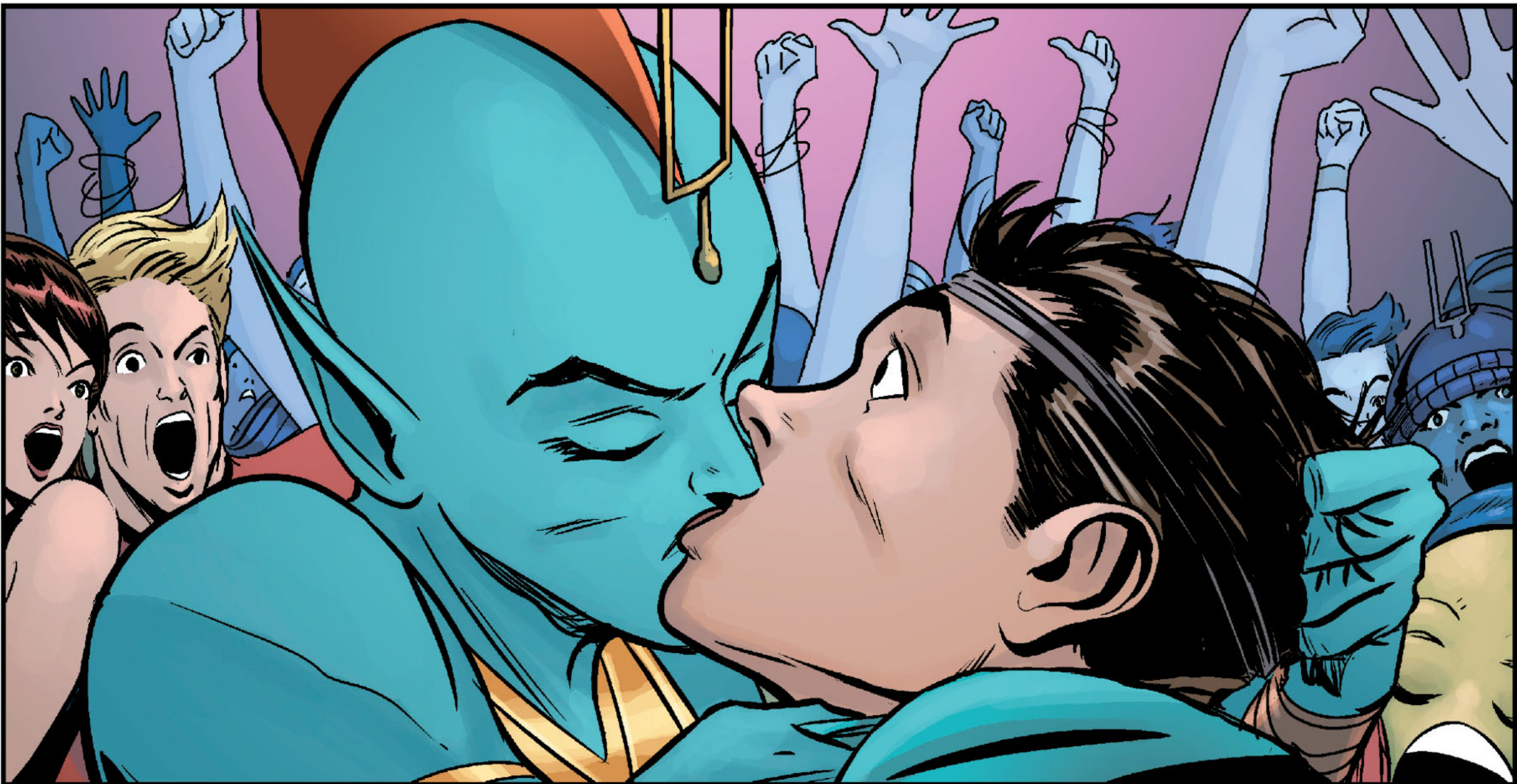
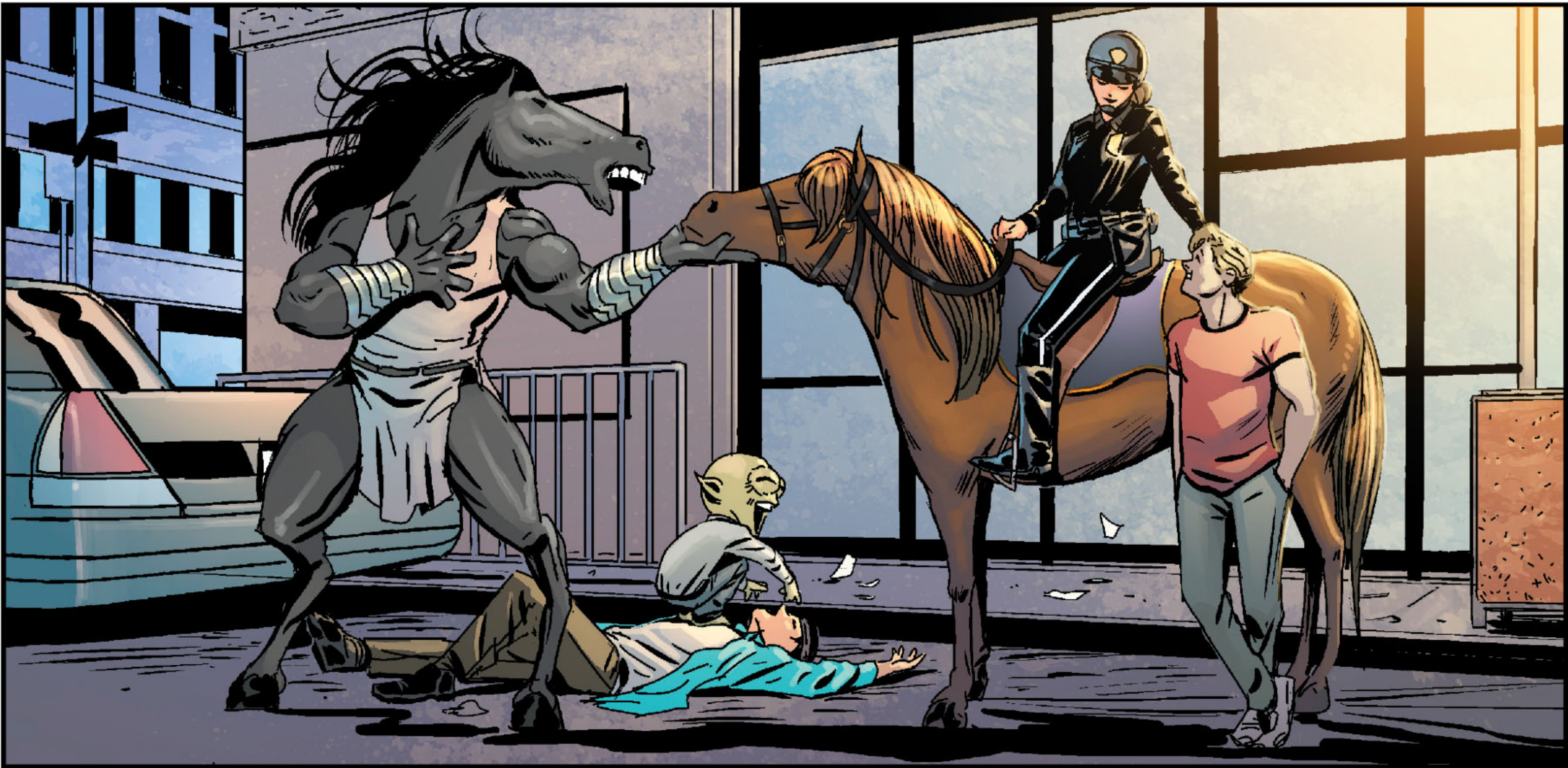


A SOAKING WET
TWENTY MINUTES
LATER.





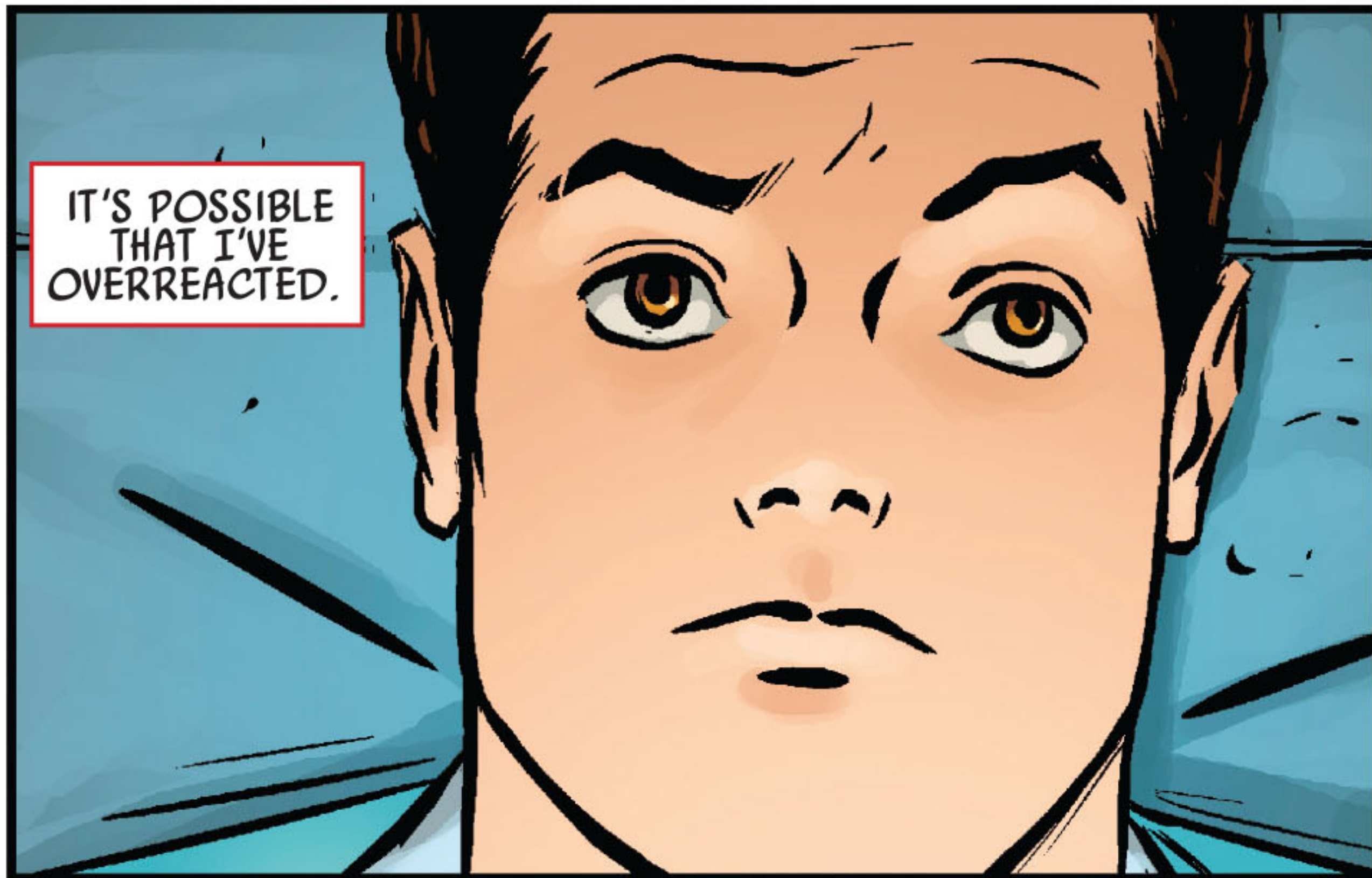




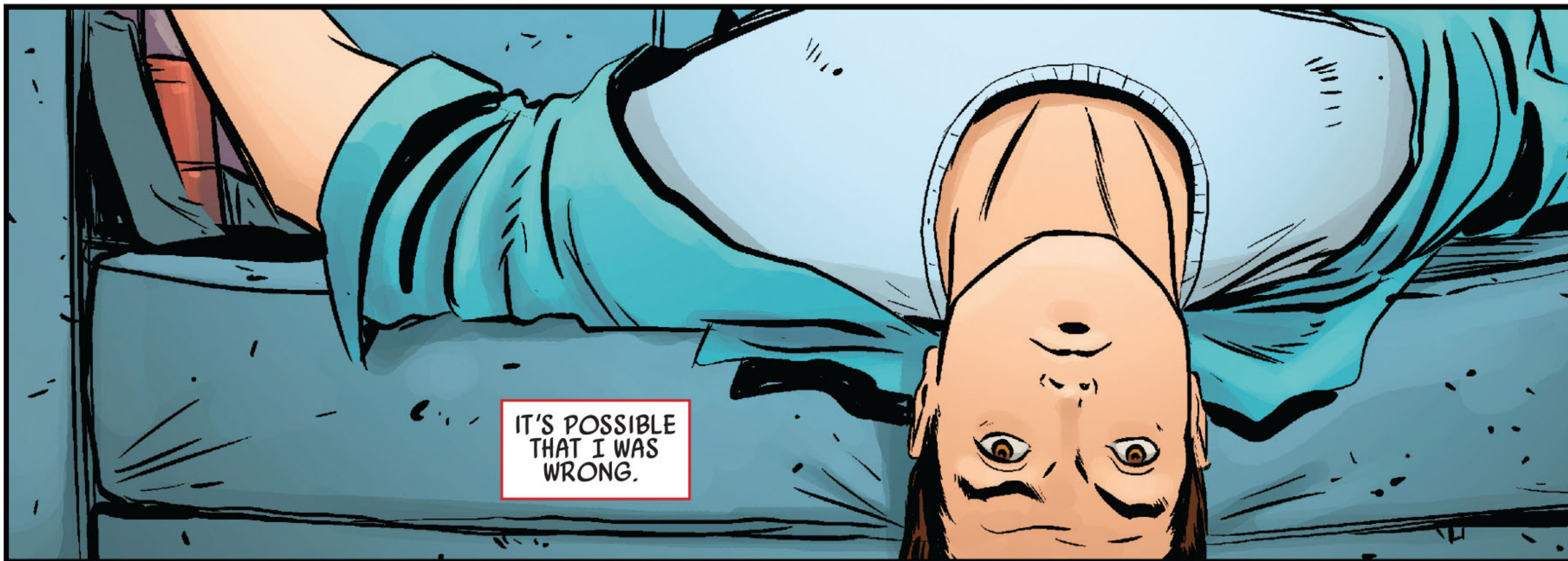


THE NEXT DAY.

OKAY...MAYBE I HAVE
A TENDENCY TO LOOK
AT THESE THINGS FROM
THE WRONG PERSPECTIVE.



IT'S POSSIBLE
THAT I'VE
OVERREACTED.

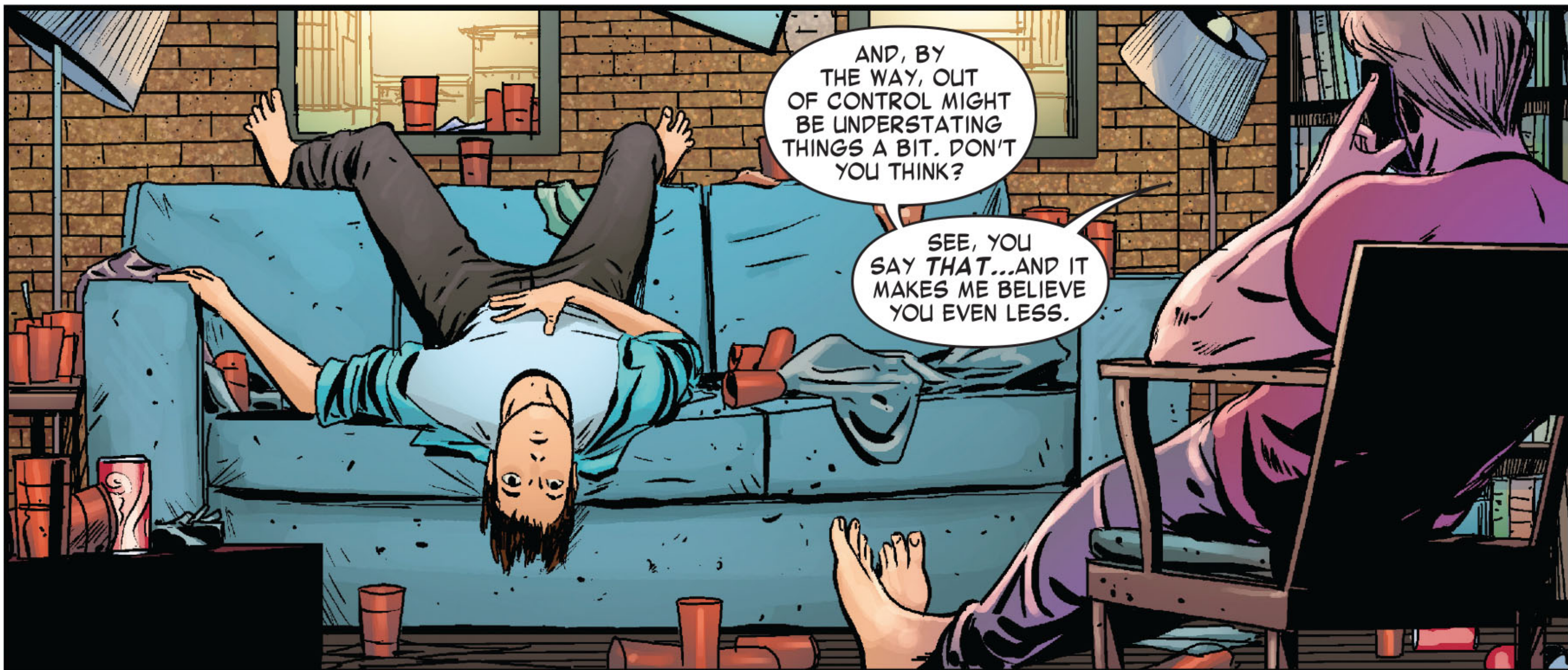


IT'S POSSIBLE
THAT I WAS
WRONG.



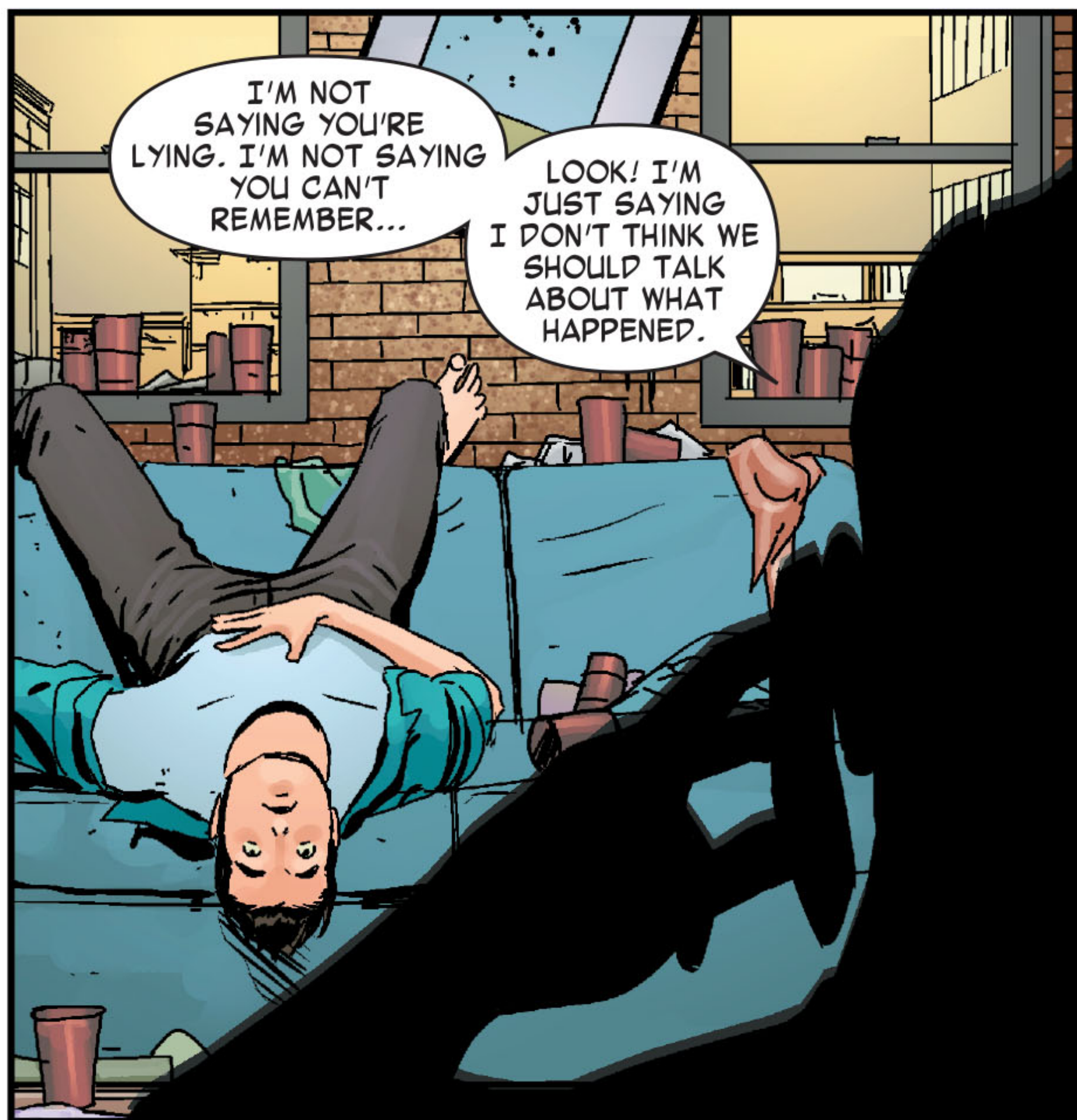
AND IT JUST MIGHT
BE POSSIBLE THAT
JOHNNY AND I ARE
GOOD TOGETHER AND
ALL OF THIS IS GOING
TO WORK OUT FINE.

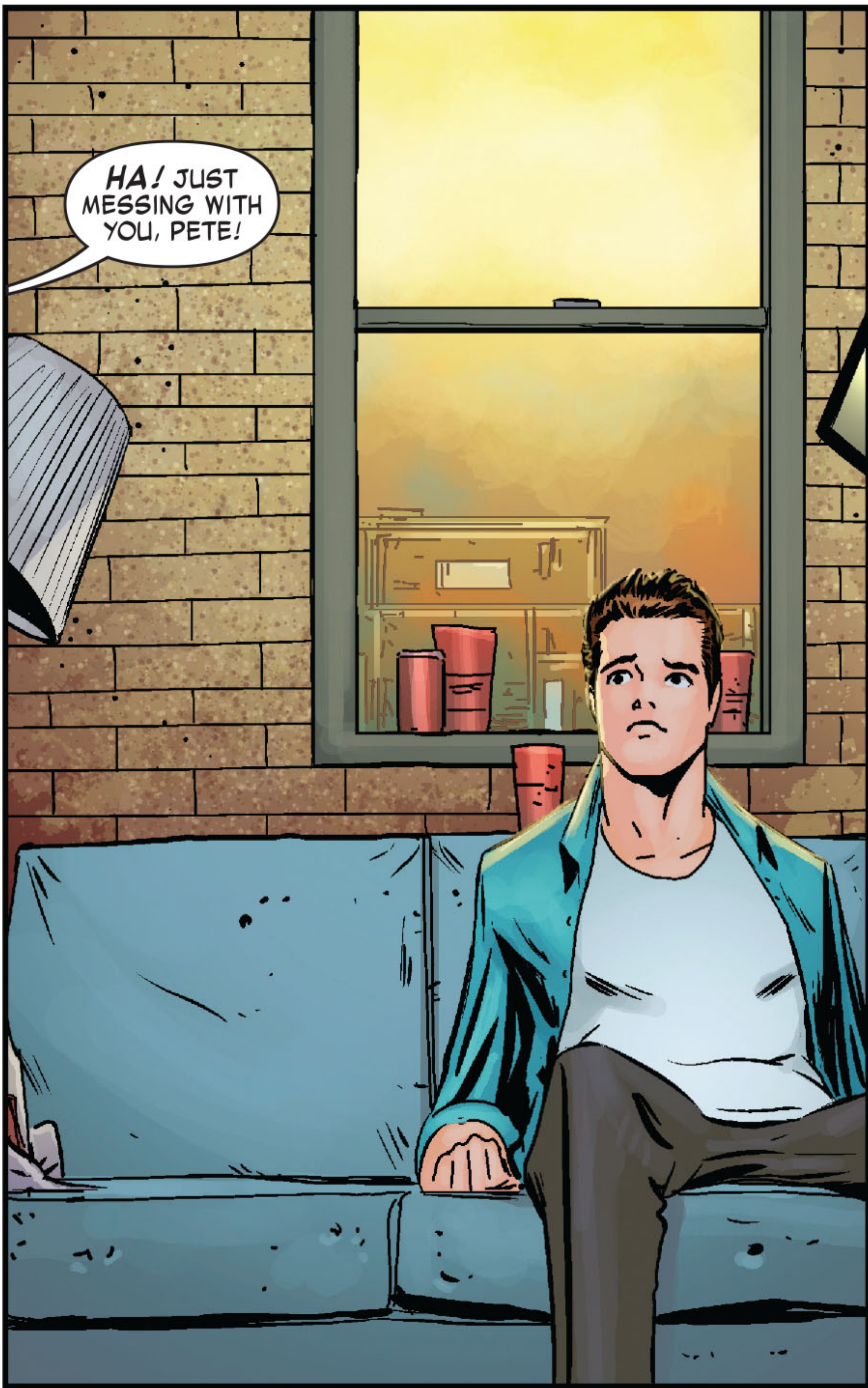
I KNOW.



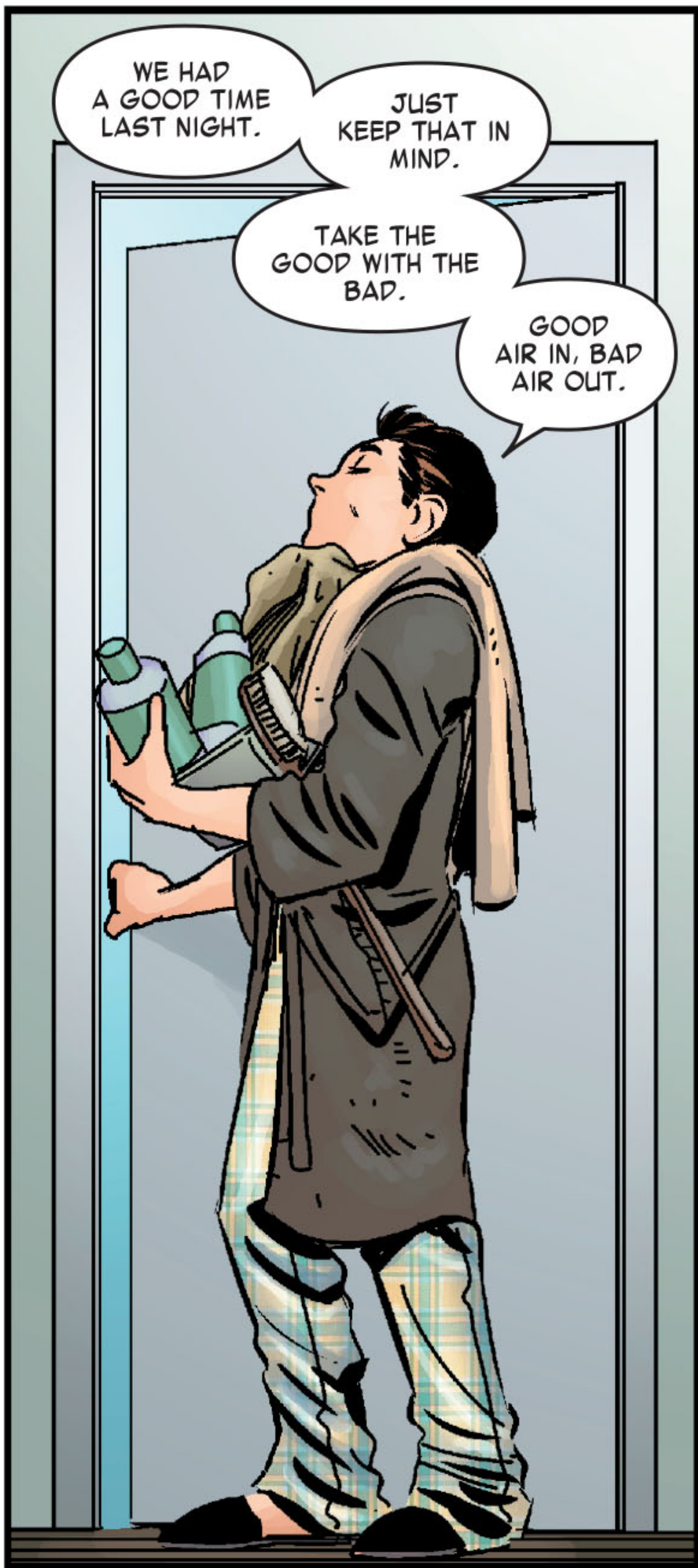
AND, BY
THE WAY, OUT
OF CONTROL MIGHT
BE UNDERSTATING
THINGS A BIT. DON'T
YOU THINK?

SEE, YOU
SAY THAT...AND IT
MAKES ME BELIEVE
YOU EVEN LESS.





To Do List, Peter Parker & Spider-Man:
#^&\$@&!! Johnny storm and
then %#^@&\$#&@! his %@#\$^!!





I'VE HAD IT! ENOUGH! NO MORE!

NO MORE WEIRD HORSE GUYS, NO MORE MAGIC DOORWAYS, NO MORE RUNNING ERRANDS, NO MORE STUPID PHONE CALLS...AND MOST OF ALL...

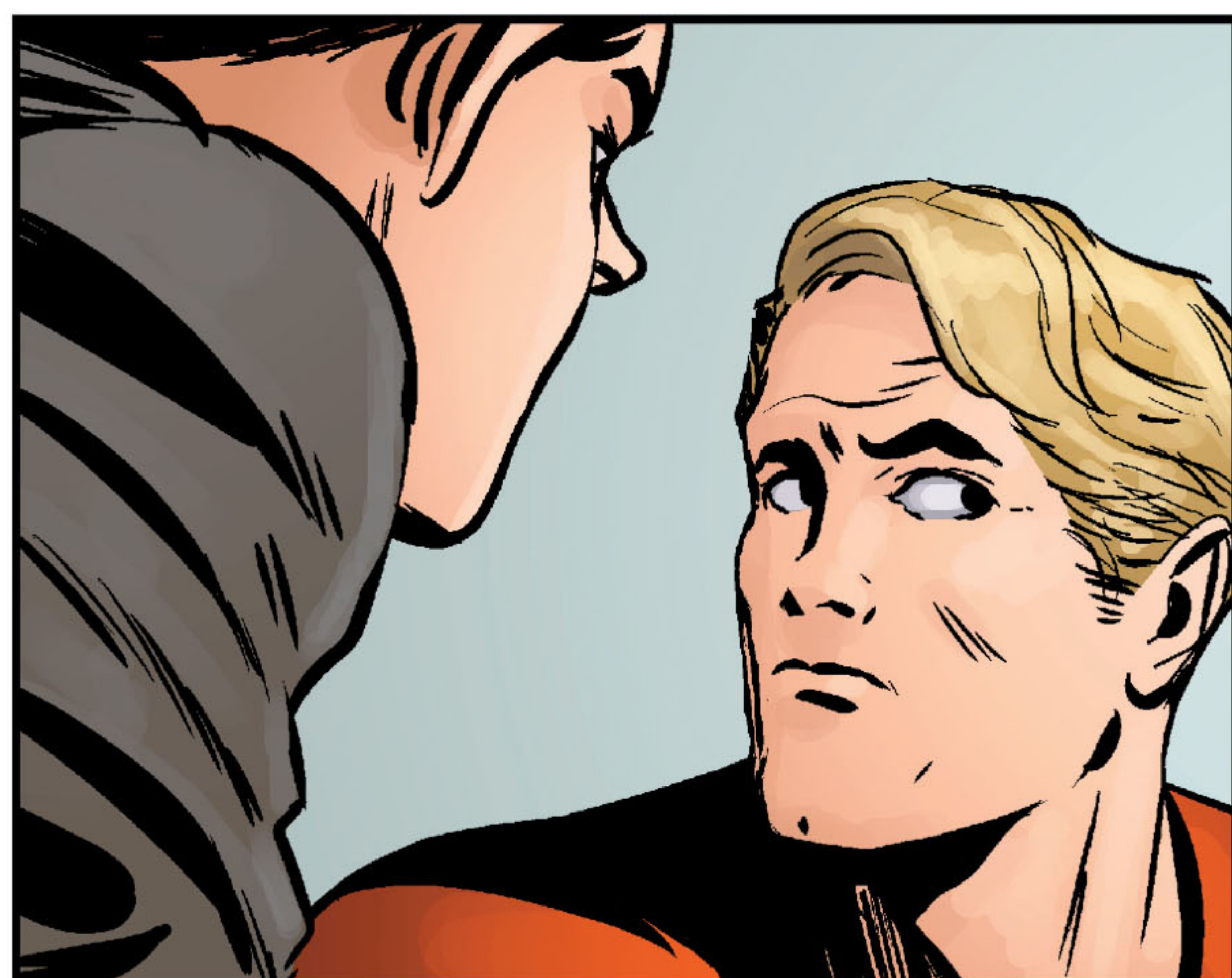
NO MORE YOU!

YOU'RE DONE, JOHNNY. IT'S OVER.

GET OUT! GET OUT! GET OUT!

GET!

OUT!



ARE YOU ASKING ME TO LEAVE?



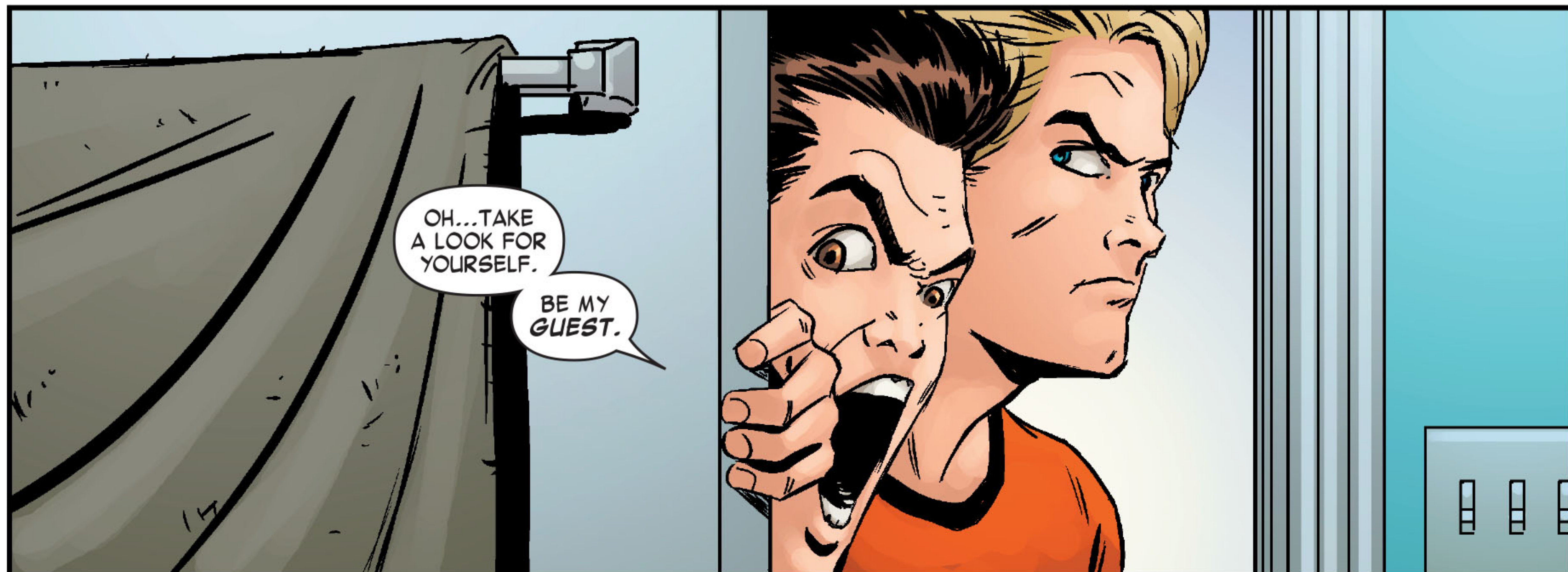
YEESSSSSS!

YES. TIME TO GO. GOOD BYE. HIT THE ROAD.

GET THE %&# OUT!

NOW, NOW... I'M SURE YOU'RE OVERREACTING, AS USUAL.

MAYBE YOU COULD LET ME KNOW EXACTLY WHAT'S GOT YOU SO UPSET?





SSSSSSSSSSSSSS!

To Do List,
Peter Parker
& Spider-Man:
~~Kick out Johnny Storm.~~
DONE!



FANTASTIC FAN PAGE 4

You know, response to this page since we reinstated it in issue #600 of FANTASTIC FOUR has been overwhelmingly strong. So it's clear that, despite whatever newfangled message boards or online communications methods may have come about, you guys like having an actual letters page in your comics. Fair enough—we aim to please! So let's see what's on your minds about recent goings-on in the world of Marvel's first family:

I'm breathless. The dizzyingly complex interplay of characters, history, and peoples, all the strange conversations and actions I've read since I restarted reading after a 20 year hiatus from FANTASTIC FOUR with the last issue then FF #1 finally make sense with the revealing of Nathaniel Richards' plan. I was totally expecting him to be a villain again.

I had to go find a copy of FANTASTIC FOUR #570 to learn about the council of Reeds, but surprisingly almost everyone else in this opera I recognized, and still couldn't see the bigger, bigger, biggest picture until you revealed it to me.

I can't believe you let me be a bit confused for over a year before the reveal. I can't believe you managed to top #600.

It's awesome. Thanks for an outstanding story. Both FF and FANTASTIC FOUR are staying on my pull list for the foreseeable future.

Seth Wegner

P.S. Doom's noblesse oblige, staying to protect his people, and calm arrogance - "What gods dare stand against me?" - I get that it's not bluster, he really does believe in his own power - and his duty. Doom the dreaded villain seen as Doom the protector gives us a glimpse of how the people of Latveria must see him, a scary god protecting them from an even scarier world. Makes me think of Kim Jong-Il.

Sorry if our recent stories have been a bit on the perplexing side, Seth, but very glad to hear that the payoff was worth all the build up! As for Doom, the fact that he's more than just a one-dimensional moustache-twirler is, I think, the secret to his appeal. Under other circumstances, he'd be the headliner—and the FF would be the villains!

Hello,

I just wanted to say that I've really enjoyed Hickman's run on all the FF titles. I haven't read anyone like him since the 1980s Claremont X-MEN run. Your writing is out of this world, literally, I am amazed at your story lines and the depth of each character. Please stay on FF as long as possible. Also, I enjoyed Bobillo's art.

Best,
Thomas Patrick Huston

Kind words, Thomas! Thanks for them—we appreciate it!

Jonathan,

If this is, in any way, supposed to be a kid's title--and it does star several kids, among others, and FF also has a 'childish' style of art/ artist--then: Why are you bogging it down with such technical jargon? If a kid actually happens to read this, you think they'd understand it? I didn't even understand much! But I love it, and I'm really, really, really glad that the 'FF' FF series is still going!

Andrew J. Shaw

Gotta disagree with you in one or two regards, Andrew! First off, just because a story happens to feature children as the protagonists doesn't mean that it's specifically being aimed at children. We like to think of FF as being a series for "children of all ages"! And don't sell today's kids short—I wouldn't be surprised if they understand all of Jonathan's technical jargon better than either you or I do!

Dear Mr. Hickman,

Thank you, just thank you for bringing back Marvel's first family, the Fantastic Four. They have been a part of my life since I was 14 years old...and 16 years later, they still remain my most secret pleasure. The comics, the animated series, the movies (I actually shed a tear when I first saw them up on the Big Screen), have been so very close to my soul. I adore that the Human Torch is back, but with a more mature aspect to the character. Finally he can contribute to the team. But you know what, i don't want to see Spider-Man go! The Avengers have reserve members, so why can't the FF? And bring She-Hulk back, she's always been a favorite. Thank you again for giving them a second chance. If anyone deserves it, it's the Fantastic Four.

Joseph Urbick

Glad the FF have been able to be such a cherished part of your life for so long, Joseph! And never fear—we've not seen the last of Spider-Man in these parts, as this month's issue of FF should prove!

Hey guys, great story so far.

But I am begging you, please let the secret that Valeria told Doom be that he is a doombot. It is the only possible explanation for his lack of foresight and intelligence throughout this story arc. Honestly, after Doom was restored he could have switched it, and moved on to other things. Even better would be that after Doom defeated his masters, he left this plane of existence leaving a "super realistic" doombot in his stead. Which would explain how he lost to Black Panther, and how evil Reed captured him so easily.

Just my 2 cents.
Mark Rennick

Sorry to say, Mark, but as you now know (assuming you read last month's FF #16) this has been the actual Doom all along—though he's now in a very interesting position as far as the future is concerned!

Dear Fantastic Fan Page,

The Fantastic Four are the most exciting, mind-blowing team in comics. Hickman's storytelling has made Marvel's First Family into a compelling, thought-provoking franchise. As an avid reader of both FANTASTIC FOUR and FF, I am grateful for the opportunity to enjoy not just one, but TWO Fantastic Four titles each month. Reading those two comics is a pleasure, and I love what Hickman has done with the characters in both books. Getting me to care about characters like Dragon Man--and making me teary-eyed at Valeria's compassion for Doctor Doom--are achievements for which Mr. Hickman deserves great credit.

Reed Beebe
Kansas City, MO

And there's no greater credit that you could give us than continuing to purchase and enjoy our two fine titles! So thank you, Reed! (Also, good name!)

It's time to get back to the basics with the Fantastic Four. Writer Jonathan Hickman has overused alternate dimensions, alternate realities and time travel to the extent that they have little impact on the readers anymore. A linear storyline would be a welcome change. Maybe a walk in Central Park rather than encountering Galactus or the Celestials every other issue. How about bringing Alicia Masters back into Ben's life? Or even Dorrie Evans with Johnny Storm?

The Valeria Richards as super-prodigy thing is a little eerie and overdone. Even if she is as smart, or smarter, than Reed, there's no clear reason why she should be so poised and mature. On a positive note, the Future Foundation is a superlative and interesting supporting cast that strengthens the extended family of the FF.

Aaron C. Burke
Rockford, Illinois.

Well, you can't please everyone every time, Aaron! But possibly this month's issues are a little more to your liking (though FF #605 does have a heap of time-travel in it!) But we'll see about doing more perambulating in the future, how's about that?

Tom B
3/6/12

As always, if you've got an opinion to share, you can e-mail it to us at MHEROES@MARVEL.COM. Be sure to mark your letters as "Okay To Print!" if you'd like to see them featured here on the Fan Page!



TM

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18

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INSTEAD, HE WAS RESURRECTED IN ANNIHILUS' SLAVE-PITS, WHERE HE EARNED THE RESPECT OF THE LEGENDARY **LIGHT BRIGADE** OF THE **UNIVERSAL INHUMANS**.
TOGETHER, THE TORCH AND THE LIGHT BRIGADE OVERTHREW ANNIHILUS' REIGN AND RETURNED TO **EARTH**.
BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN THAT THE SITUATION WITHIN THE NEGATIVE ZONE IS STABLE...



“WHAT DO YOU CALL THE OPPOSITE OF A FIELD TRIP?”



REED RICHARDS
MISTER FANTASTIC



SUSAN RICHARDS
INVISIBLE WOMAN



JOHNNY STORM
THE HUMAN TORCH



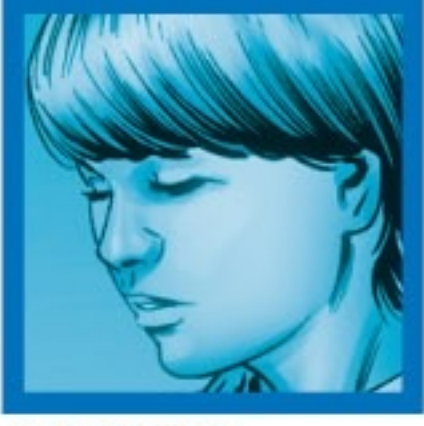
VALERIA RICHARDS



FRANKLIN RICHARDS



FUTURE FRANKLIN
RICHARDS



ALEX POWER



DRAGON MAN



WU & VIL



MIK, KORR & TURG



TONG



LEECH



ARTIE



BENTLEY



BLACK BOLT



ANNIHILUS

WRITER: **JONATHAN HICKMAN**

ARTIST: **NICK DRAGOTTA**

COLOR ARTIST: **CHRIS SOTOMAYOR**

LETTERER: **VC's CLAYTON COWLES**

COVER ARTIST: **KALMAN ANDRASOFSZKY**

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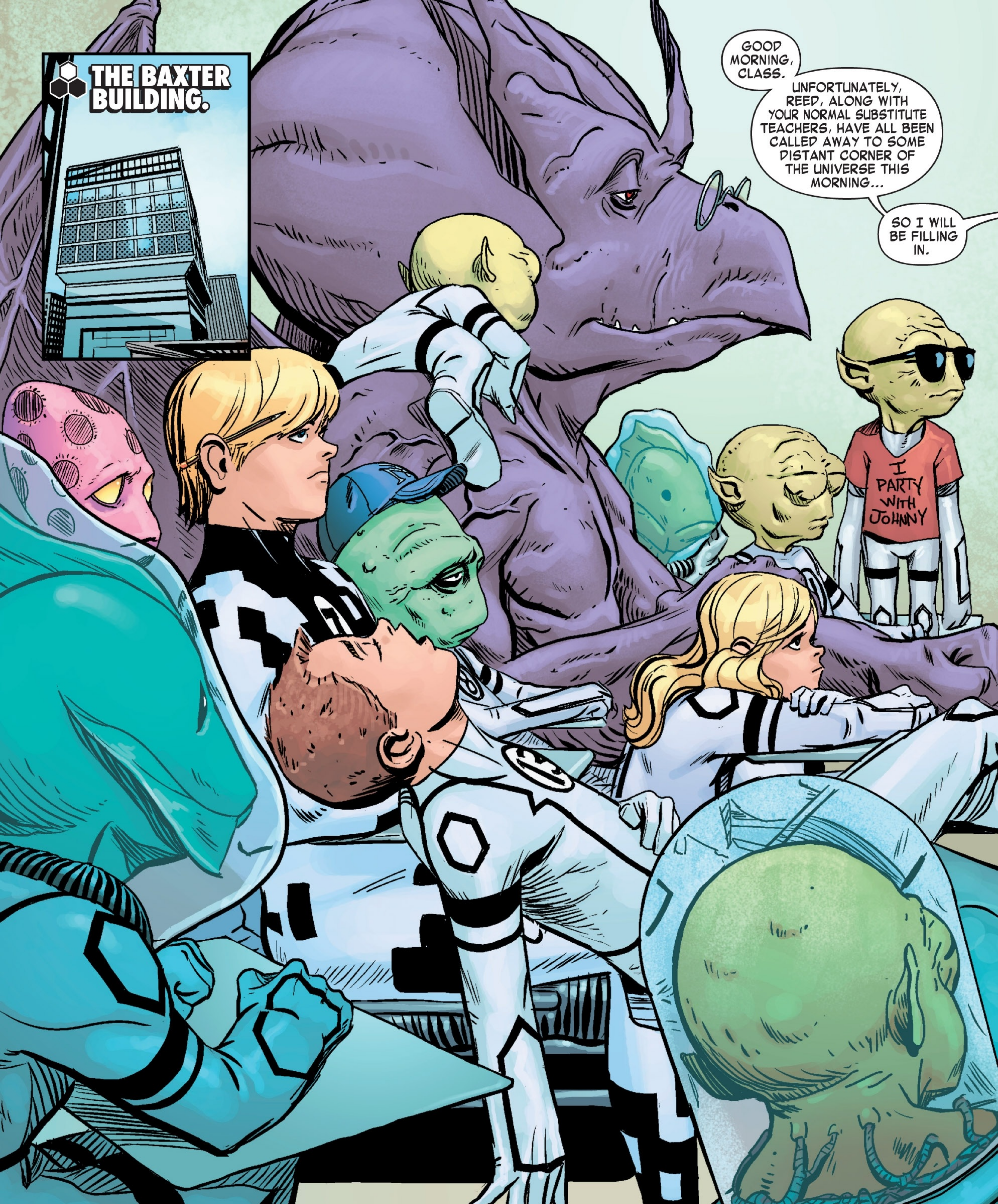
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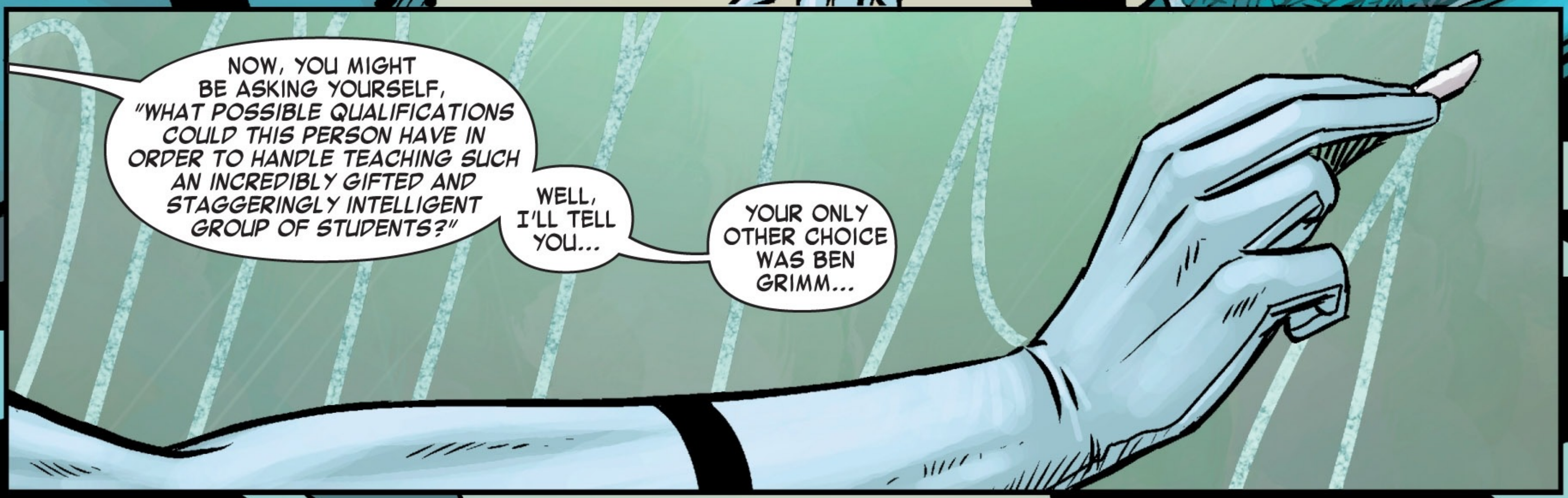
THE BAXTER BUILDING.



GOOD MORNING, CLASS.

UNFORTUNATELY, REED, ALONG WITH YOUR NORMAL SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS, HAVE ALL BEEN CALLED AWAY TO SOME DISTANT CORNER OF THE UNIVERSE THIS MORNING...

SO I WILL BE FILLING IN.



NOW, YOU MIGHT BE ASKING YOURSELF, "WHAT POSSIBLE QUALIFICATIONS COULD THIS PERSON HAVE IN ORDER TO HANDLE TEACHING SUCH AN INCREDIBLY GIFTED AND STAGGERINGLY INTELLIGENT GROUP OF STUDENTS?"

WELL, I'LL TELL YOU...

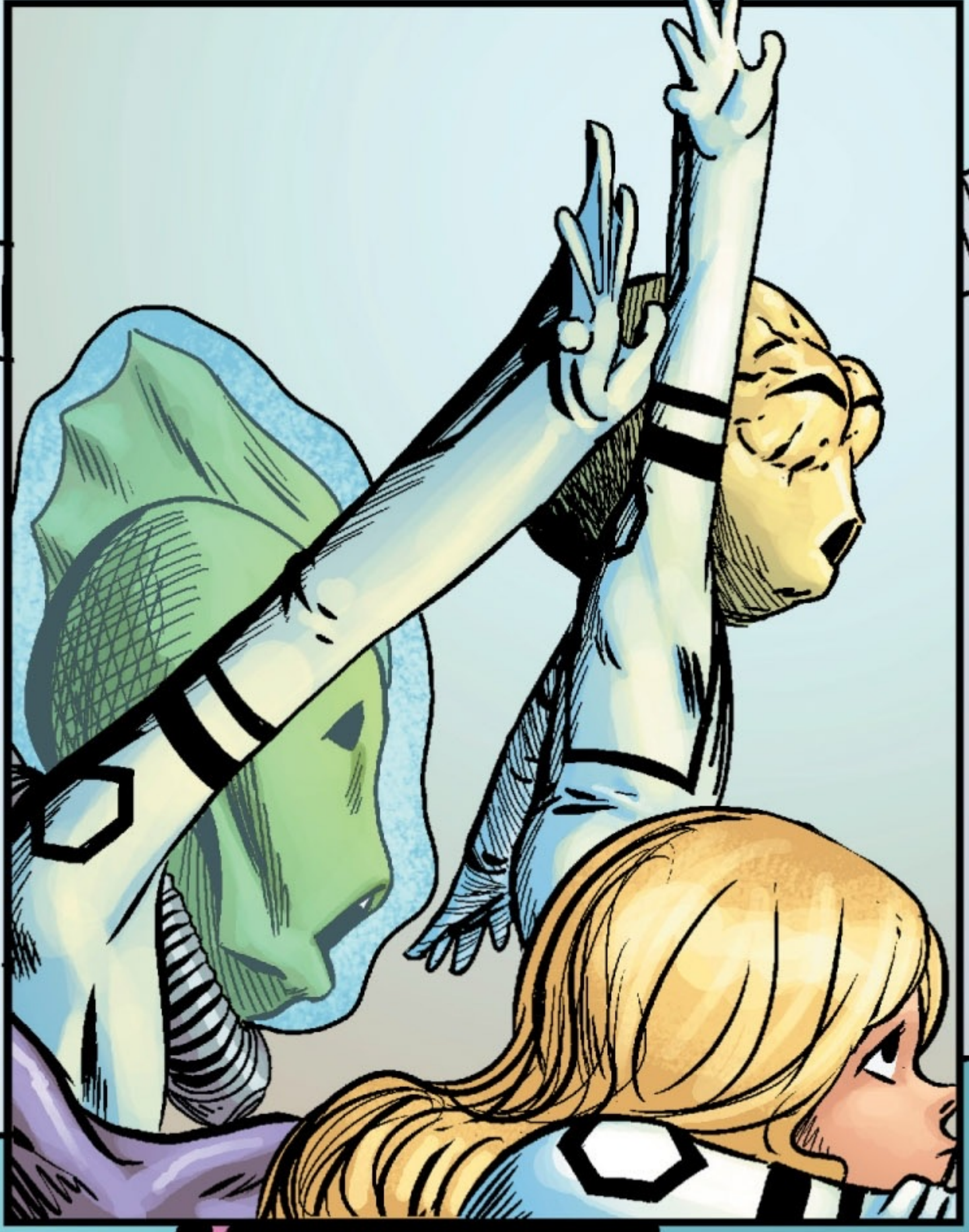
YOUR ONLY OTHER CHOICE WAS BEN GRIMM...

...AND WE ALL KNOW HE'S AS DUMB AS A BAG OF ROCKS, DON'T WE?

SO, LET THE HEALING BEGIN.

WHO'S GOT A QUESTION?

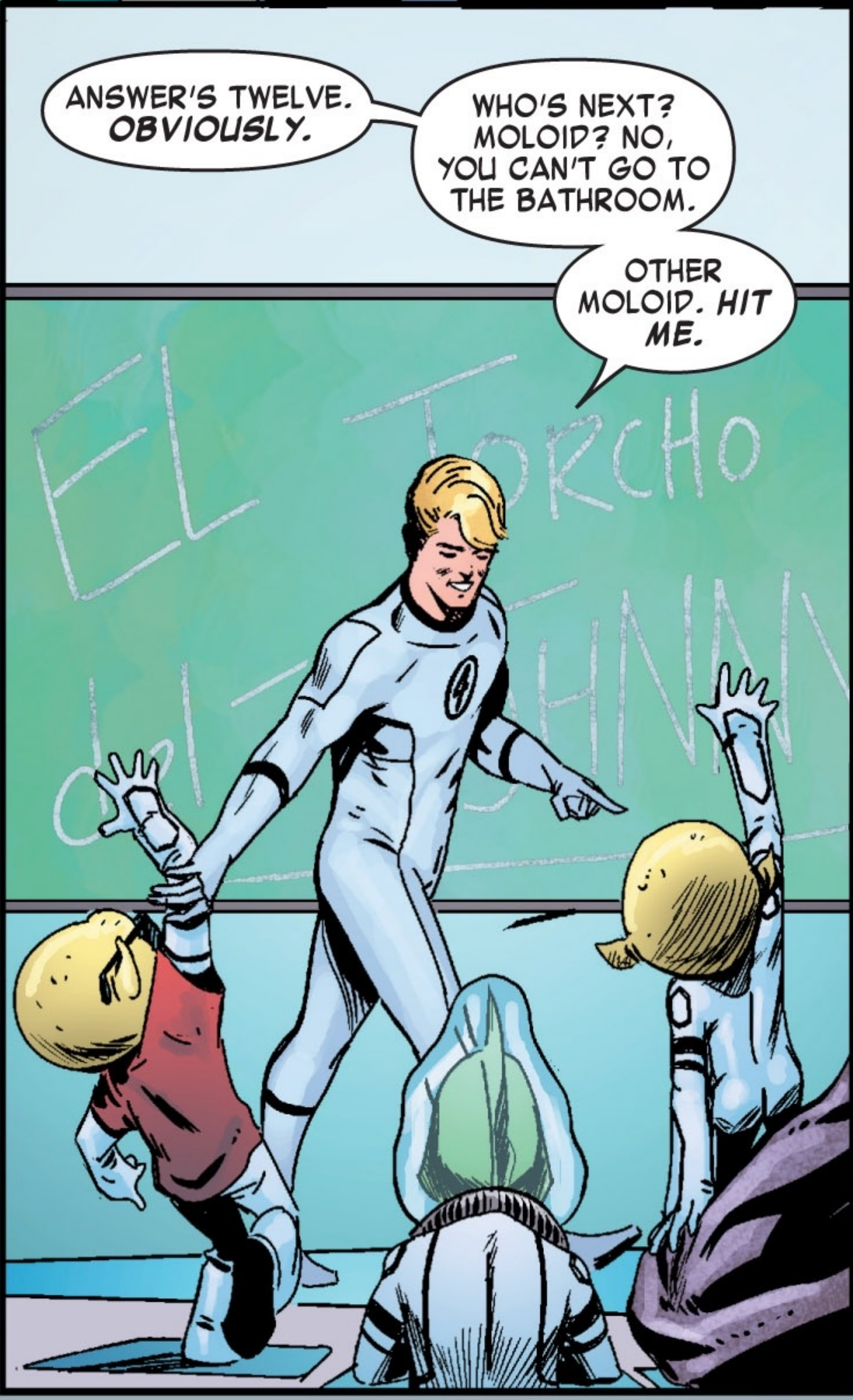
EL TORCHO
del JOHNNY



YOU. WEIRD-LOOKING FISH KID. GO.



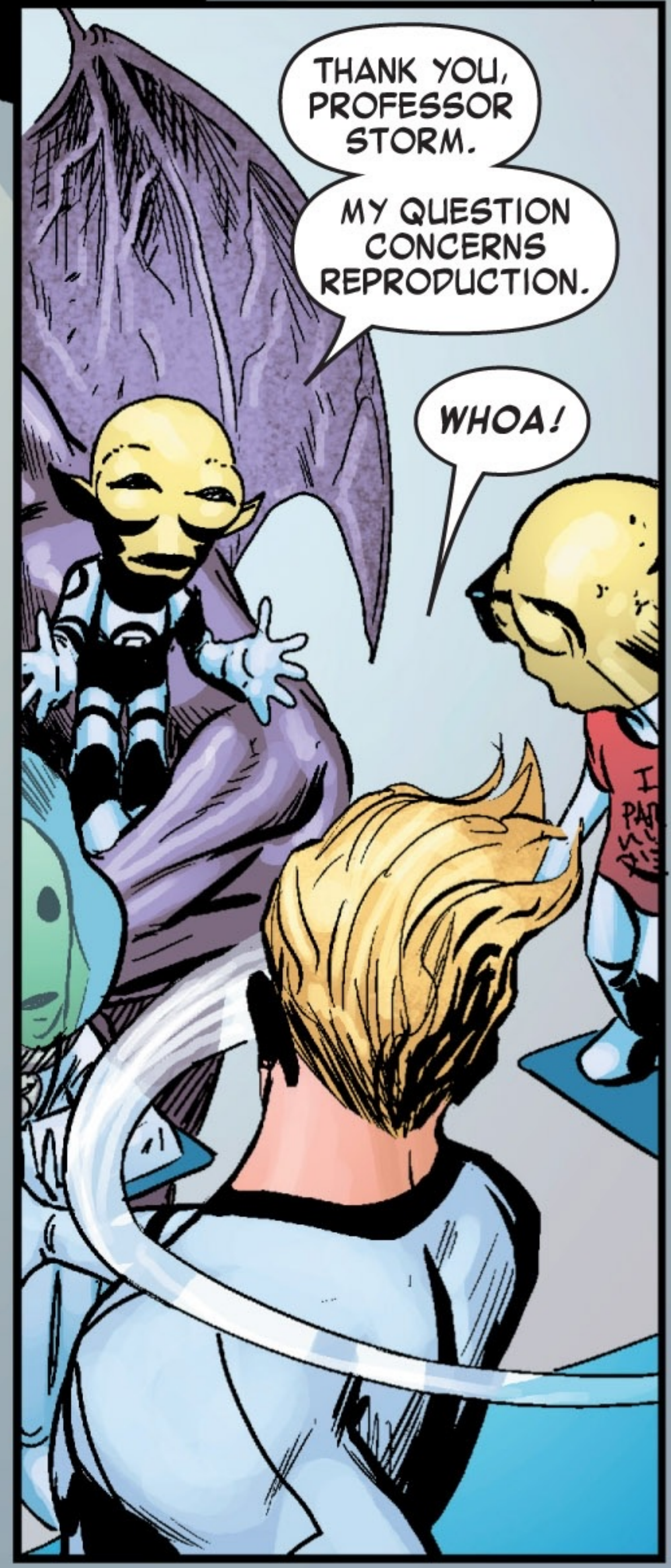
$\prod_{p \leq x} \frac{N_p}{p} \approx C \log(x)^r$ as $x \rightarrow \infty$



ANSWER'S TWELVE. OBVIOUSLY.

WHO'S NEXT? MOLOID? NO, YOU CAN'T GO TO THE BATHROOM.

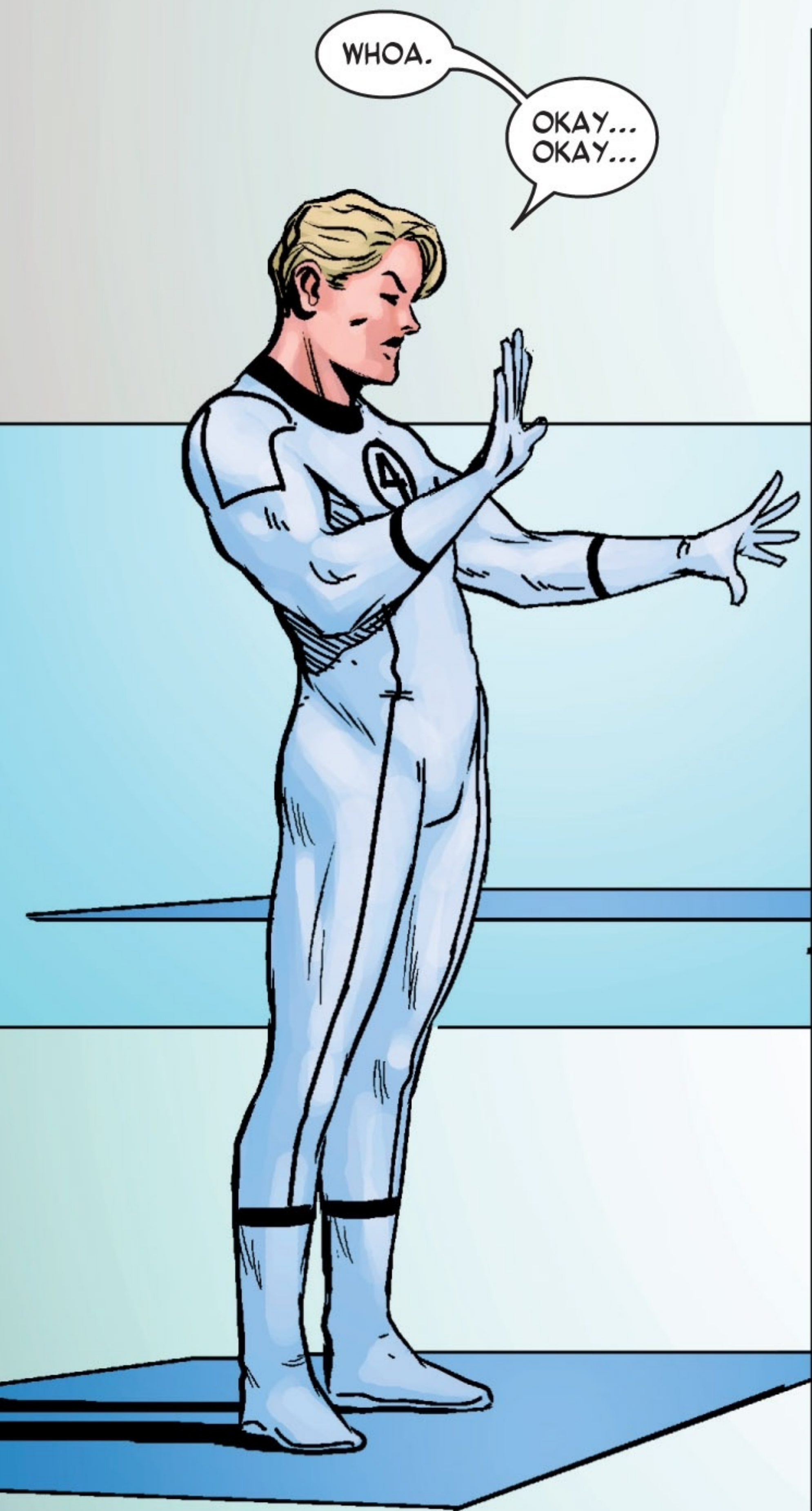
OTHER MOLOID. HIT ME.



THANK YOU, PROFESSOR STORM.

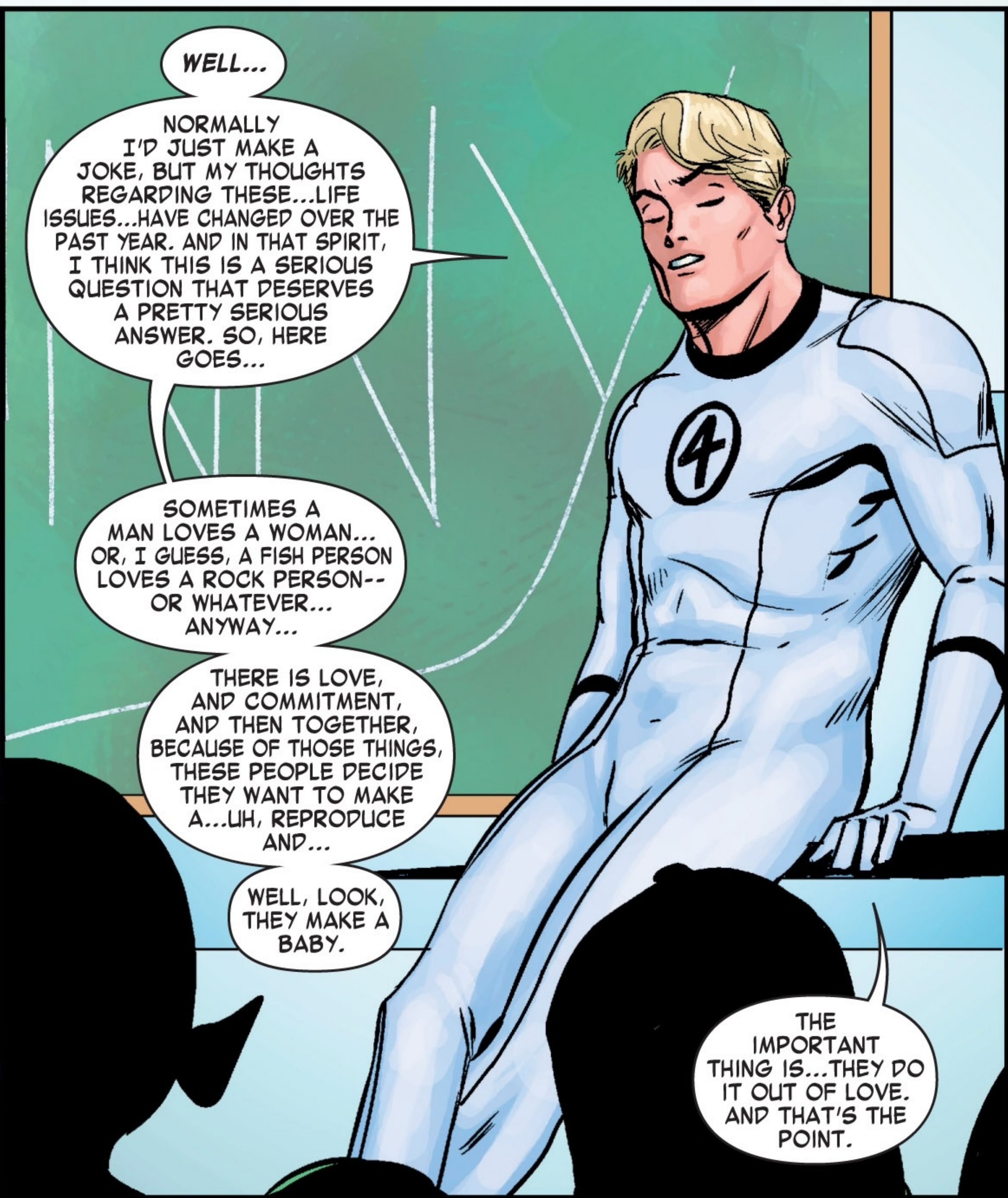
MY QUESTION CONCERNS REPRODUCTION.

WHOA!



WHOA.

OKAY...
OKAY...



WELL...

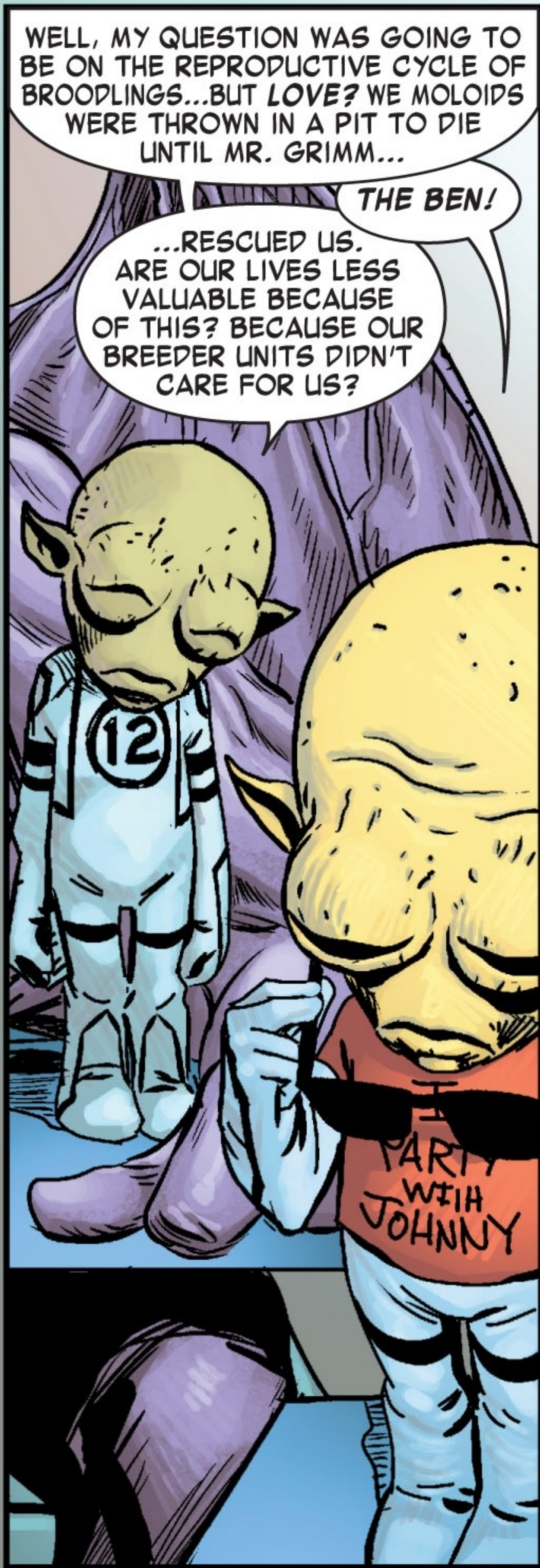
NORMALLY I'D JUST MAKE A JOKE, BUT MY THOUGHTS REGARDING THESE...LIFE ISSUES...HAVE CHANGED OVER THE PAST YEAR. AND IN THAT SPIRIT, I THINK THIS IS A SERIOUS QUESTION THAT DESERVES A PRETTY SERIOUS ANSWER. SO, HERE GOES...

SOMETIMES A MAN LOVES A WOMAN... OR, I GUESS, A FISH PERSON LOVES A ROCK PERSON-- OR WHATEVER... ANYWAY...

THERE IS LOVE, AND COMMITMENT, AND THEN TOGETHER, BECAUSE OF THOSE THINGS, THESE PEOPLE DECIDE THEY WANT TO MAKE A...UH, REPRODUCE AND...

WELL, LOOK, THEY MAKE A BABY.

THE IMPORTANT THING IS...THEY DO IT OUT OF LOVE. AND THAT'S THE POINT.



WELL, MY QUESTION WAS GOING TO BE ON THE REPRODUCTIVE CYCLE OF BROODLINGS...BUT LOVE? WE MOLOIDS WERE THROWN IN A PIT TO DIE UNTIL MR. GRIMM...

THE BEN!

...RESCUED US. ARE OUR LIVES LESS VALUABLE BECAUSE OF THIS? BECAUSE OUR BREEDER UNITS DIDN'T CARE FOR US?



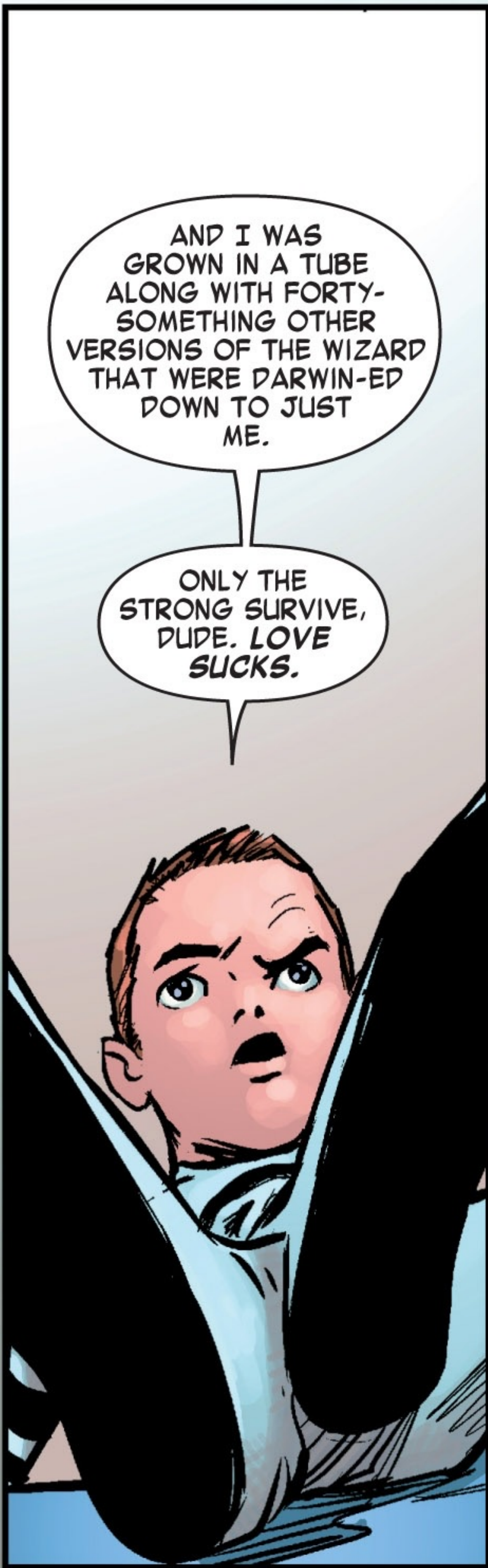
VII AND I, WE WERE HATCHED--TWO OF THOUSANDS.

I DO NOT BELIEVE OUR SIRE EVEN KNEW OUR NAMES UNTIL WE HAD SURVIVED EIGHT DRY CYCLES.



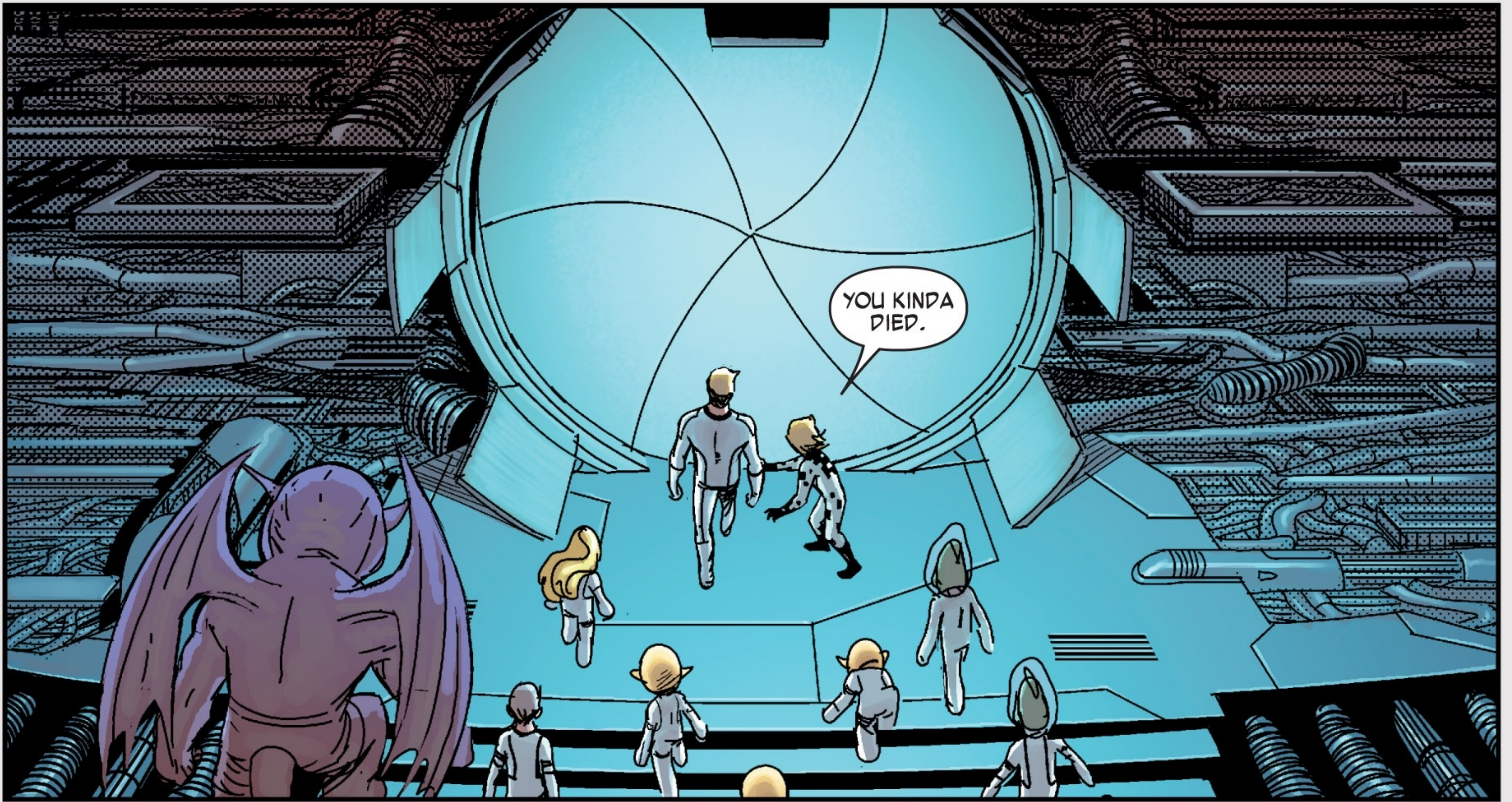
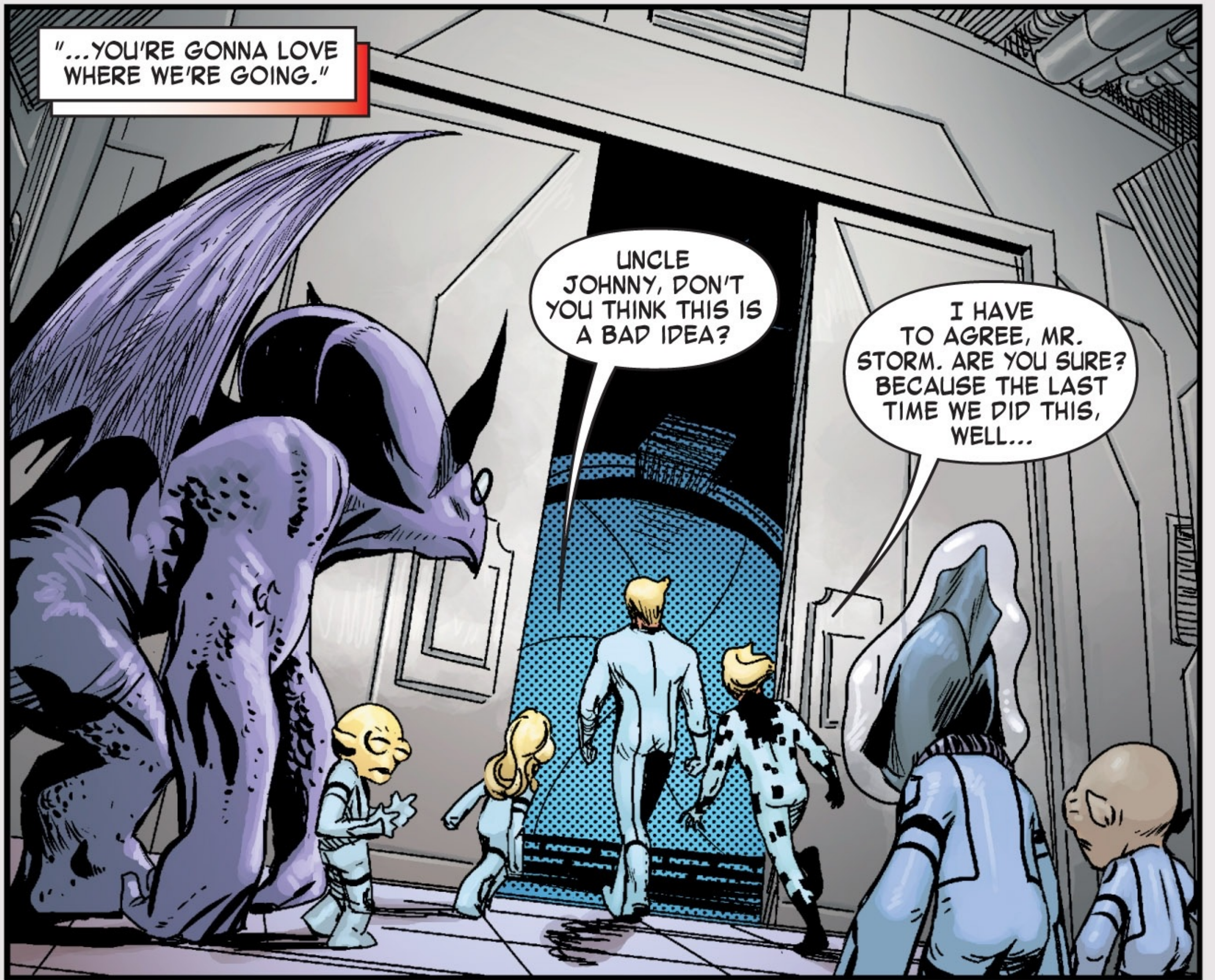
YES. I FIND THIS CONCEPT TROUBLING TO CONSIDER. I WAS BUILT. MADE. JUST A THING WITH A PURPOSE.

I SUPPOSE MY MAKER LOVED ME AS MUCH AS YOU WOULD LOVE A SCREWDRIVER. OR A SANDWICH.



AND I WAS GROWN IN A TUBE ALONG WITH FORTY-SOMETHING OTHER VERSIONS OF THE WIZARD THAT WERE DARWIN-ED DOWN TO JUST ME.

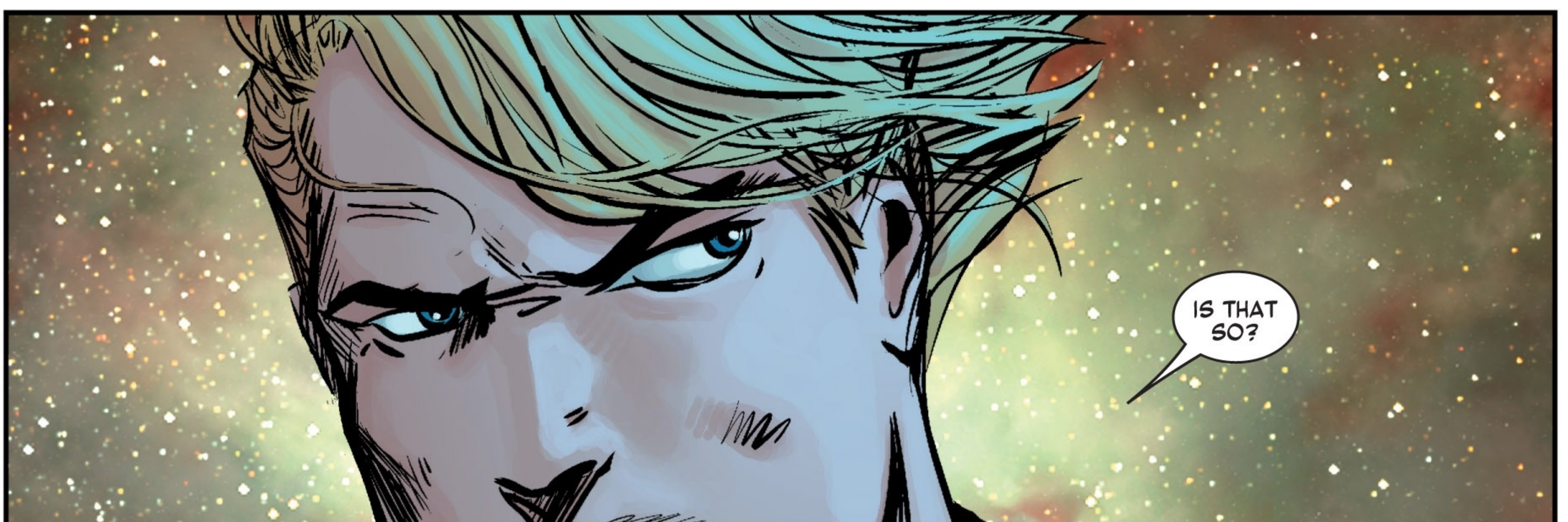
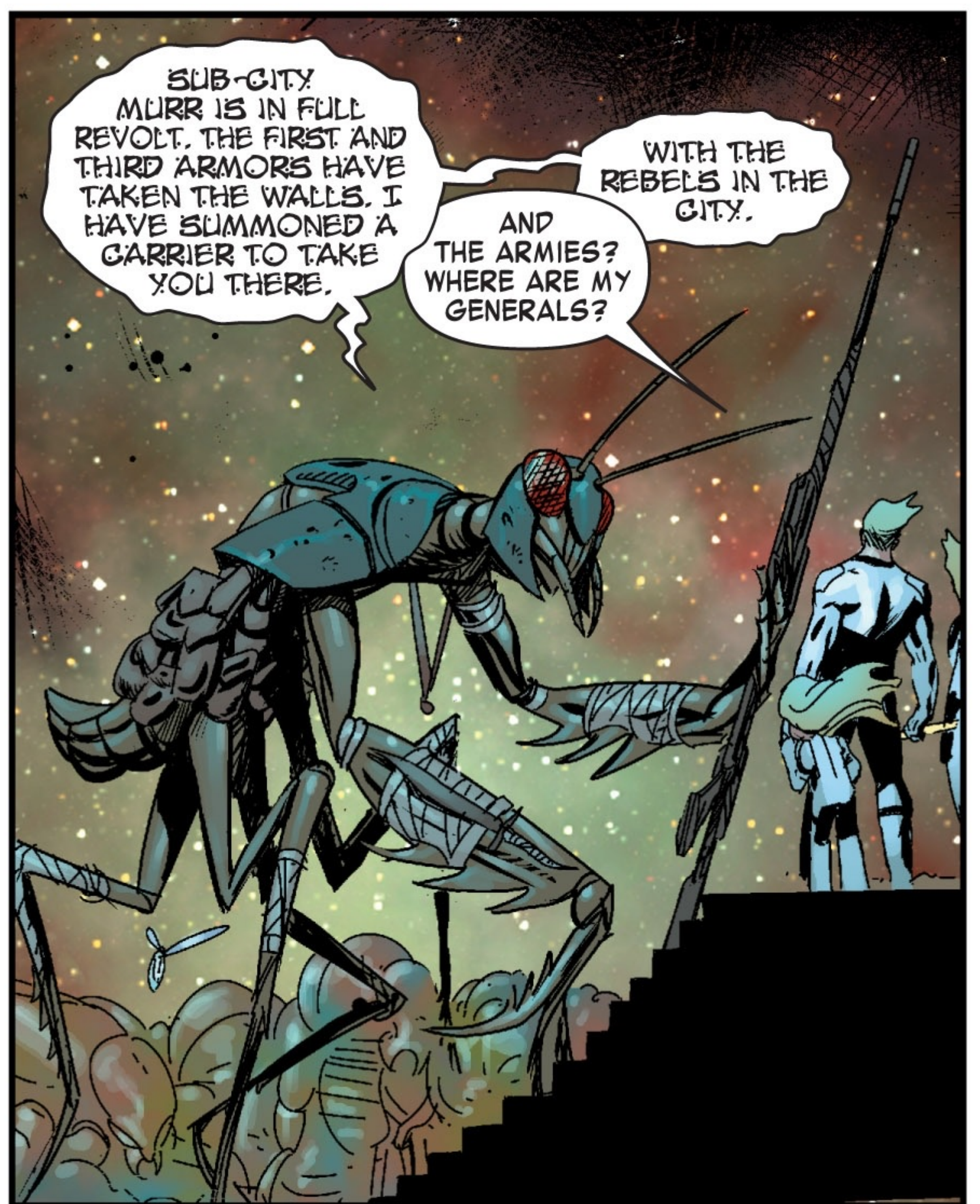
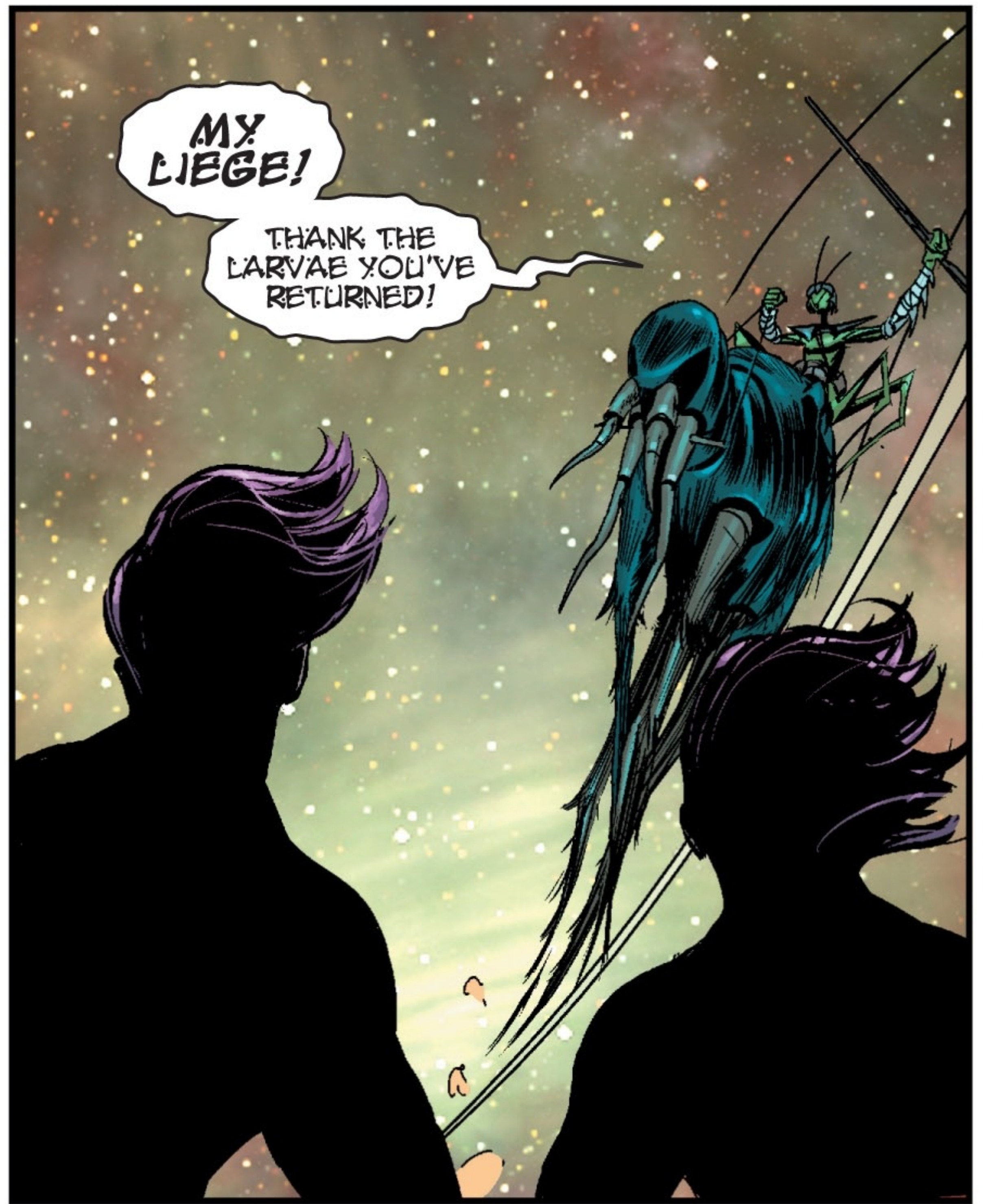
ONLY THE STRONG SURVIVE, DUDE. LOVE SUCKS.





THIS
IS MY HOUSE
NOW.

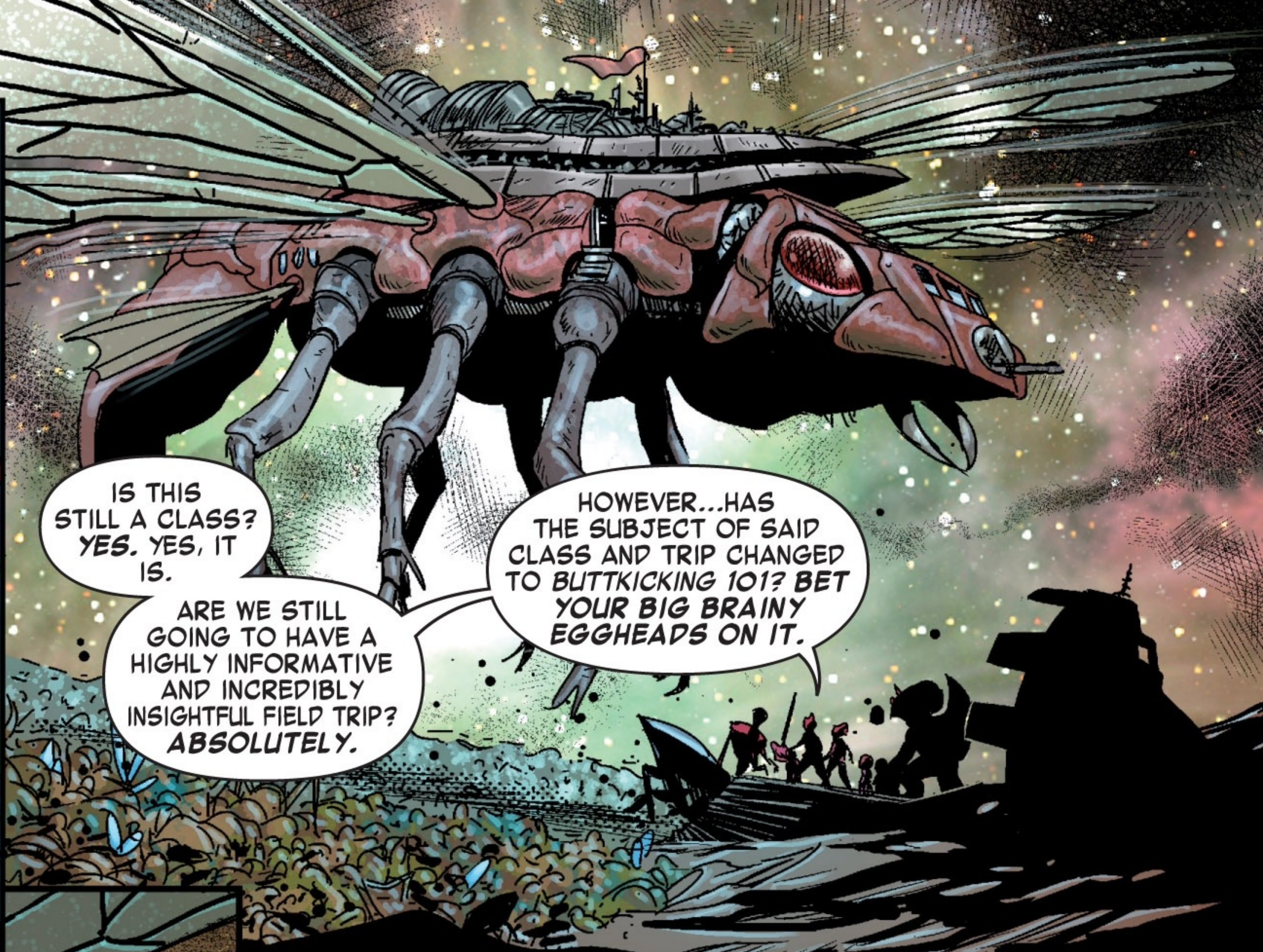
WELCOME TO
THE NEGATIVE
ZONE.





OKAY,
EVERYONE GATHER
'ROUND.

SUBSTITUTE
STORM HAS A FEW
ANNOUNCEMENTS
TO MAKE.



IS THIS
STILL A CLASS?
YES. YES, IT
IS.

ARE WE STILL
GOING TO HAVE A
HIGHLY INFORMATIVE
AND INCREDIBLY
INSIGHTFUL FIELD TRIP?
ABSOLUTELY.

HOWEVER...HAS
THE SUBJECT OF SAID
CLASS AND TRIP CHANGED
TO BUTTKICKING 101? BET
YOUR BIG BRAINY
EGGHEADS ON IT.



LET'S
GO!



IS PROFESSOR
JOHNNY AWARE THAT
WE DON'T HAVE ENTRY
LEVEL COURSES AT
OUR SCHOOL?

SOMETHING-
SOMETHING 101...
EMBARRASSING.

REMEDIAL.
PROFESSOR RICHARDS
IS GOING TO BE
SOME KIND OF
DISAPPOINTED.

COGNITIVELY
INHIBITING.

TWHP! AND
THE MAKEUP
WORK IS REALLY GOING
TO EAT INTO OUR
SPRING BREAK.



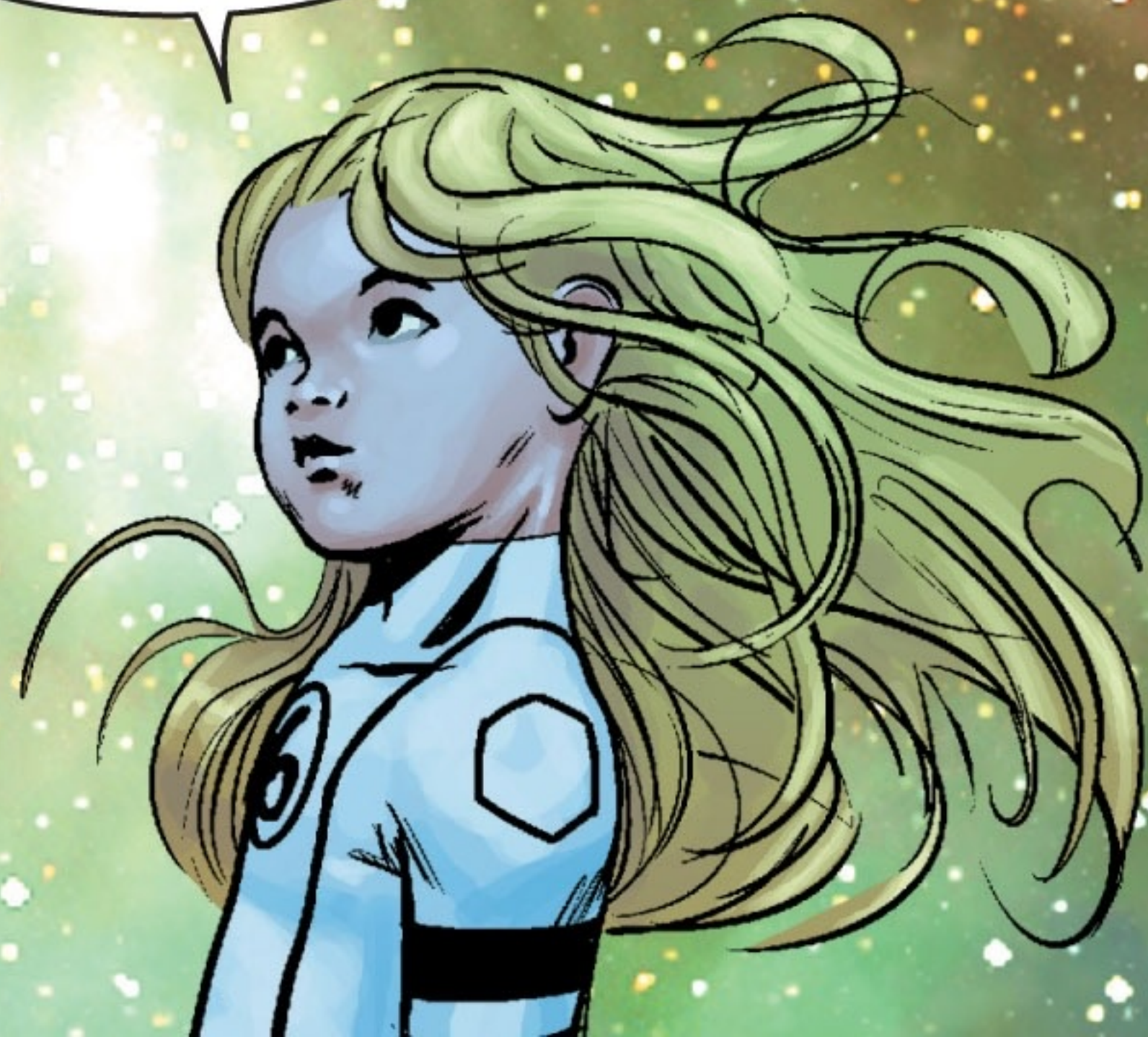
WELL...I
DON'T FEEL SO
GOOD ABOUT
THIS.

I'D CALL
YOU A LIAR IF
YOU SAID WHAT I
WAS THINKING,
ALEX, BUT...



UH-HUH...

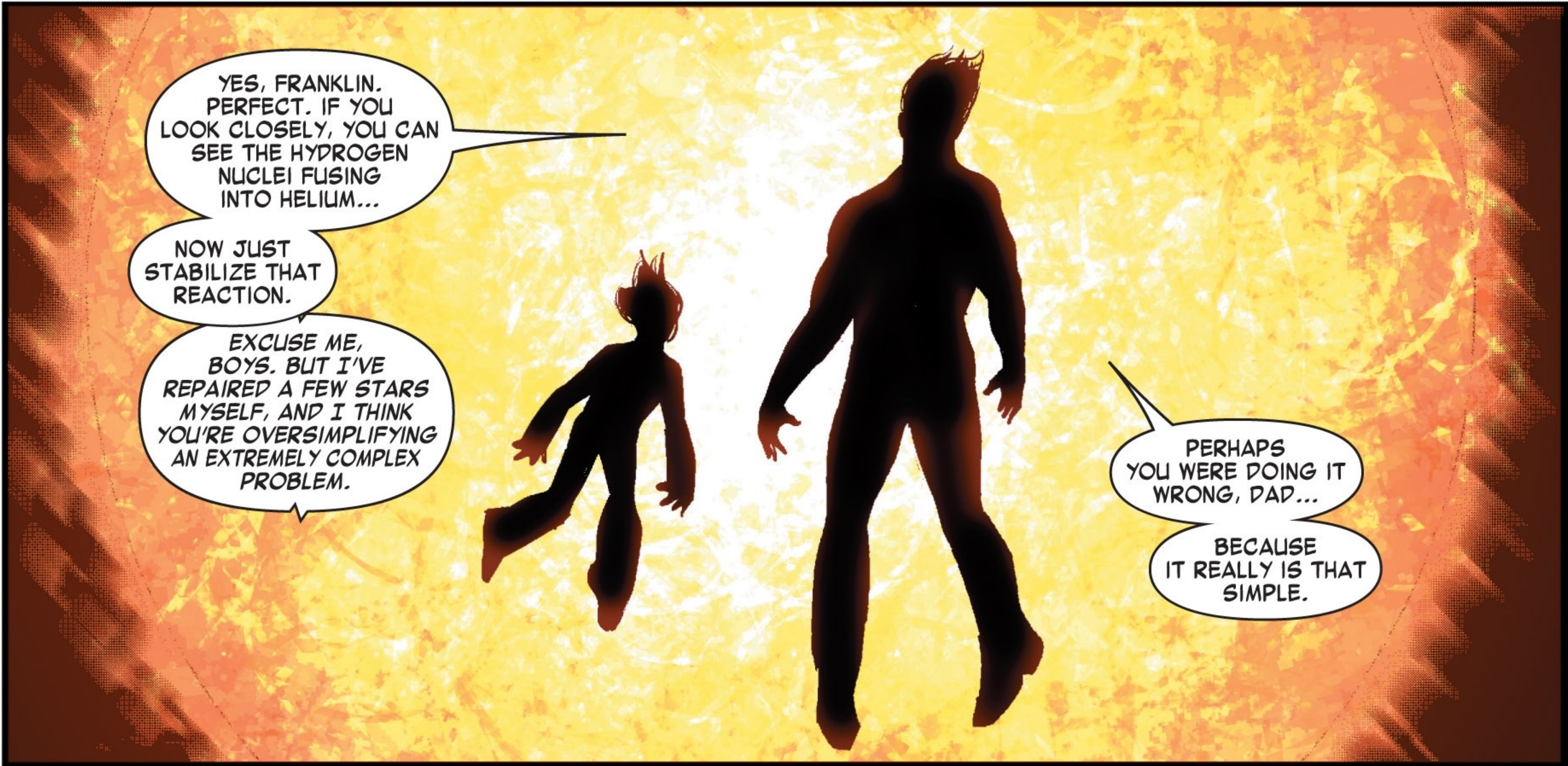
YOU KNOW
WHAT I'M THINKING,
RIGHT?





"...WE SURE COULD
USE FRANKLIN
ABOUT NOW."

LIKE
THAT?



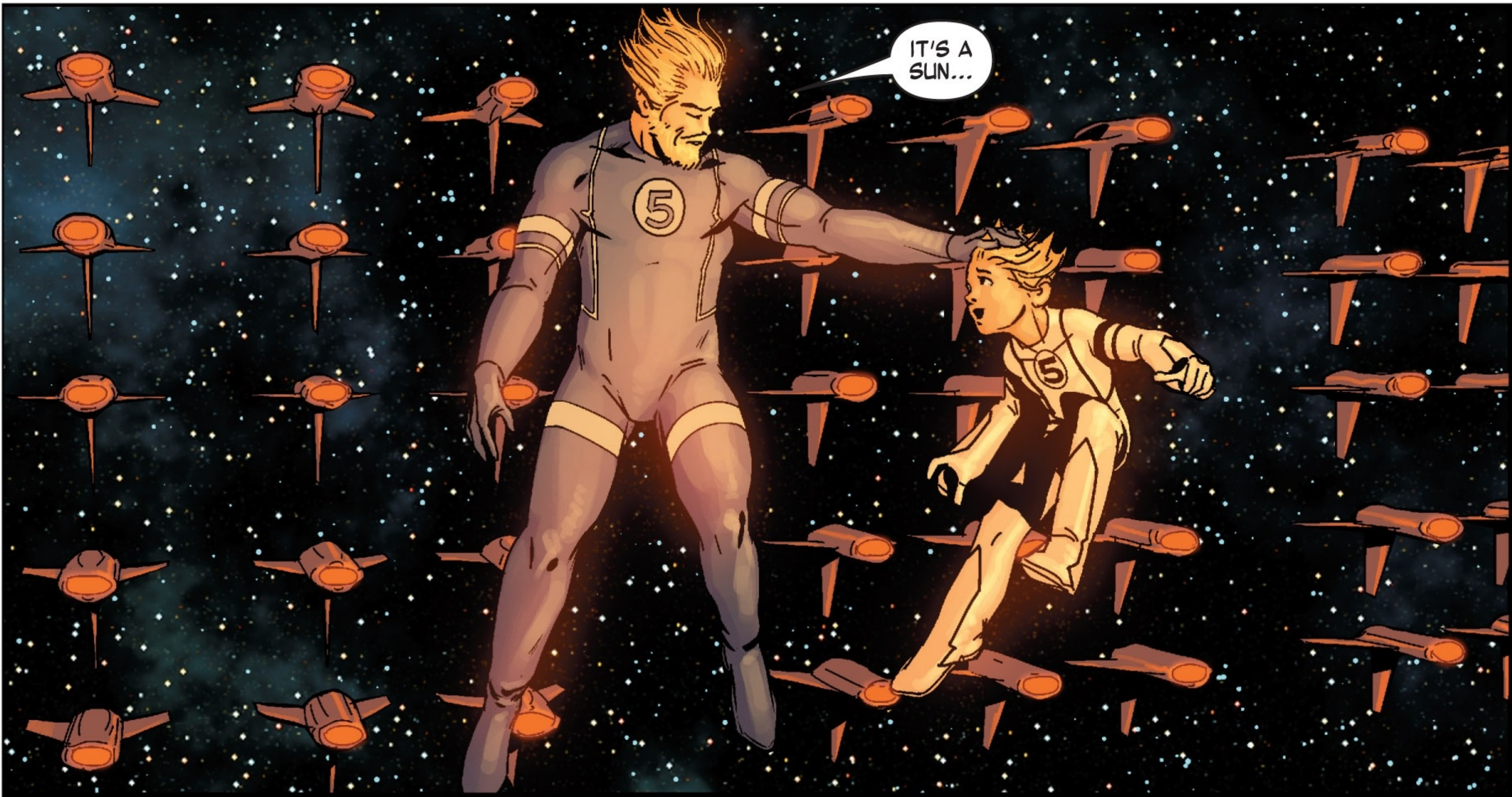
YES, FRANKLIN.
PERFECT. IF YOU
LOOK CLOSELY, YOU CAN
SEE THE HYDROGEN
NUCLEI FUSING
INTO HELIUM...

NOW JUST
STABILIZE THAT
REACTION.

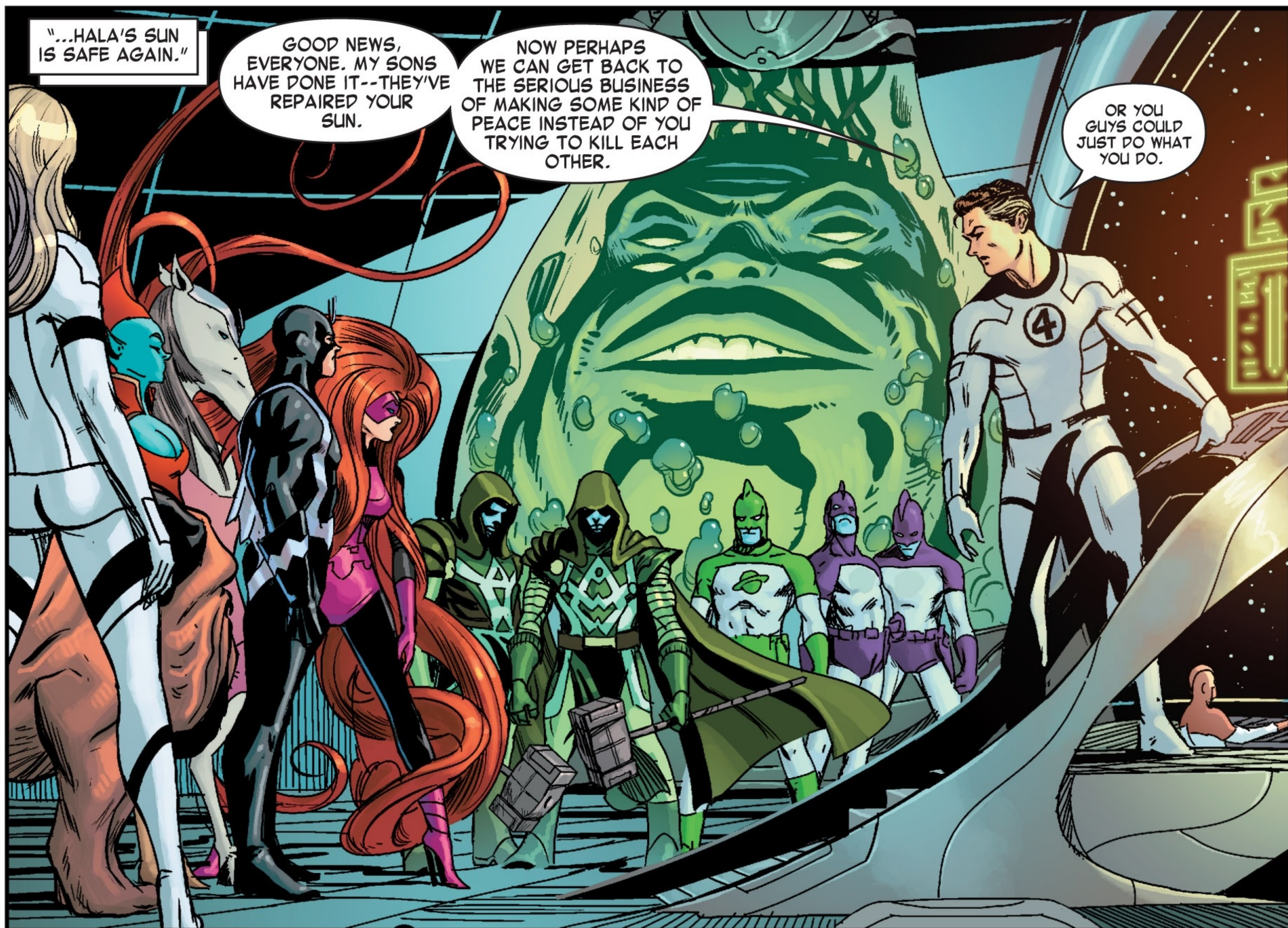
EXCUSE ME,
BOYS. BUT I'VE
REPAIRED A FEW STARS
MYSELF, AND I THINK
YOU'RE OVERSIMPLIFYING
AN EXTREMELY COMPLEX
PROBLEM.

PERHAPS
YOU WERE DOING IT
WRONG, DAD...

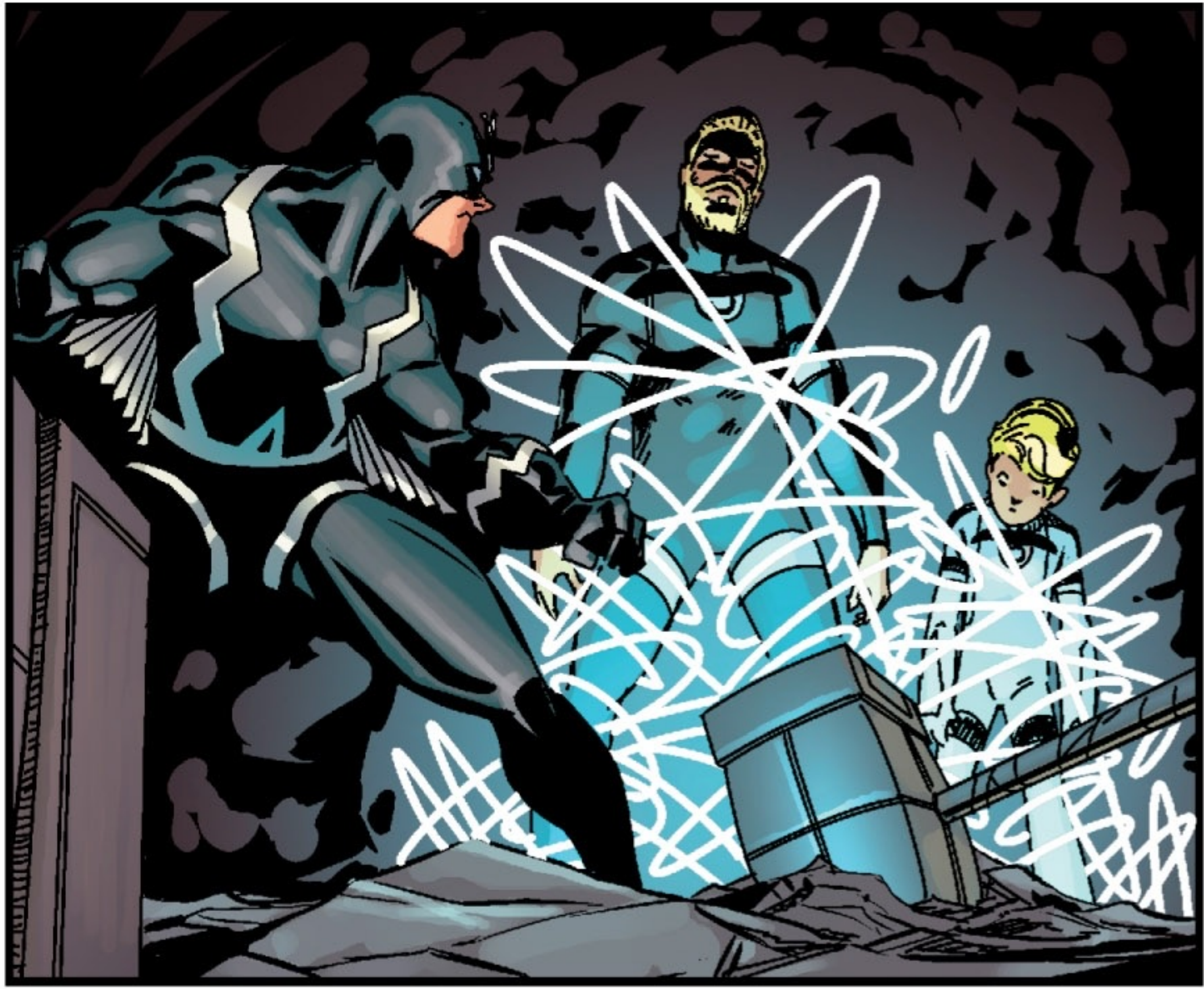
BECAUSE
IT REALLY IS THAT
SIMPLE.

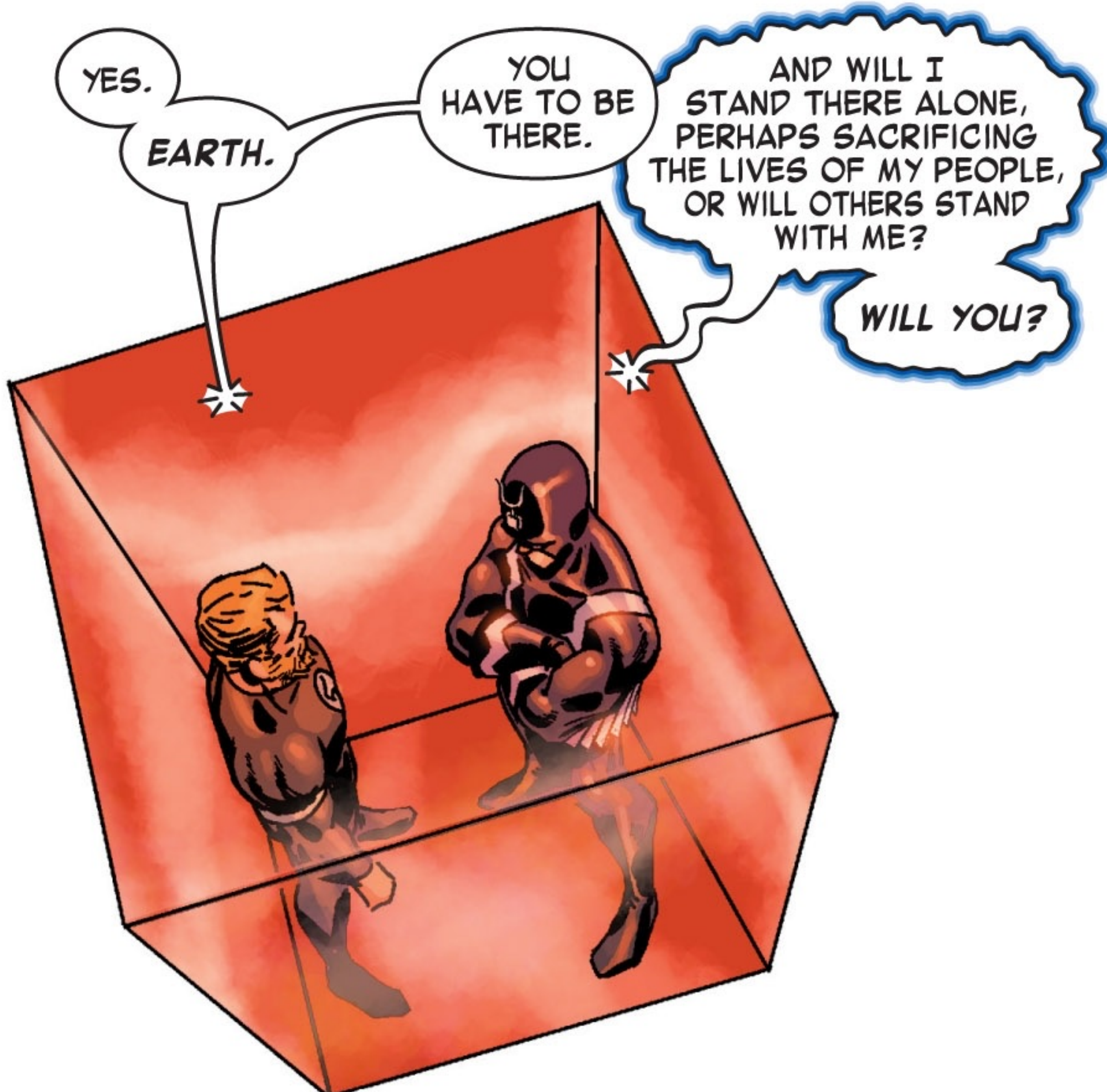
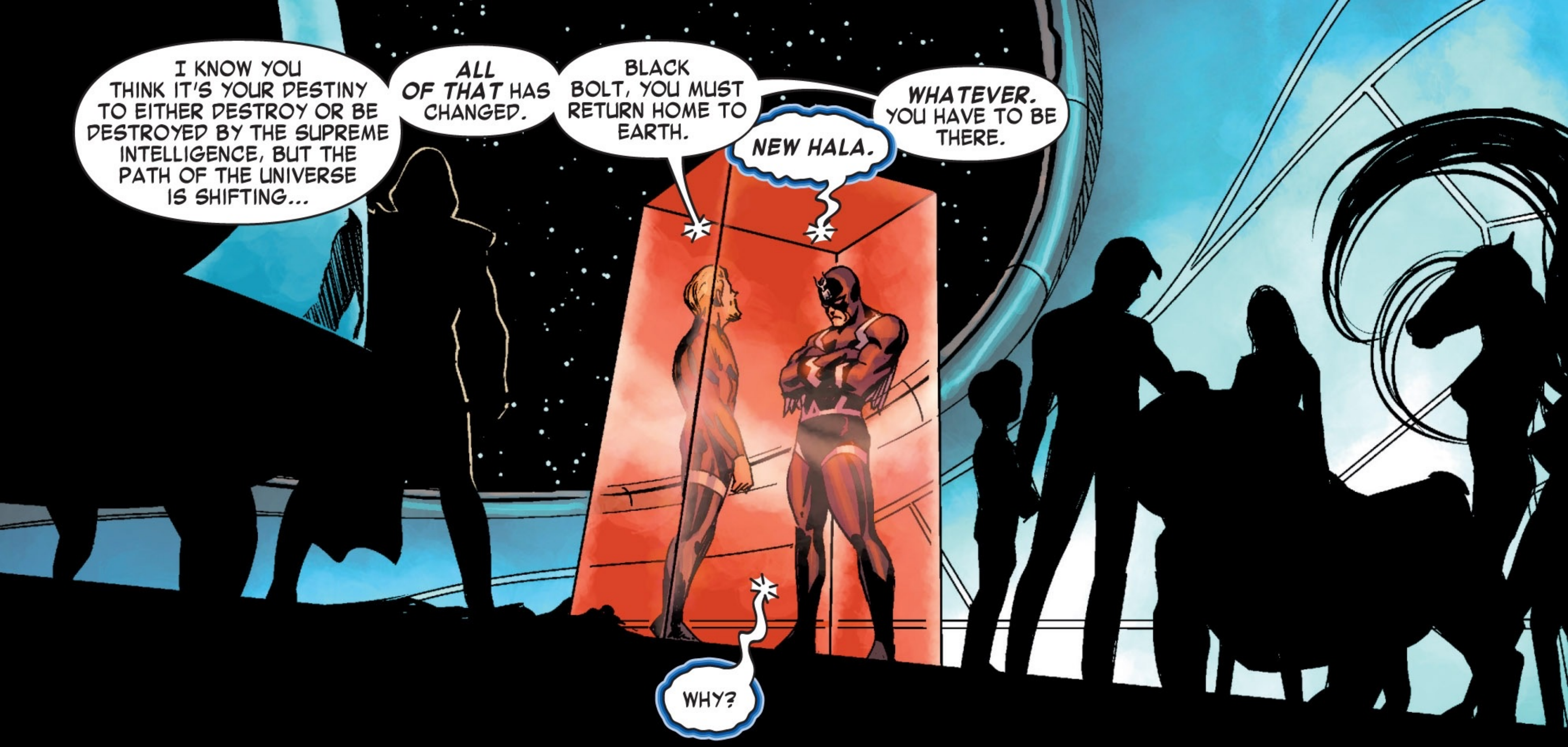


IT'S A
SUN...



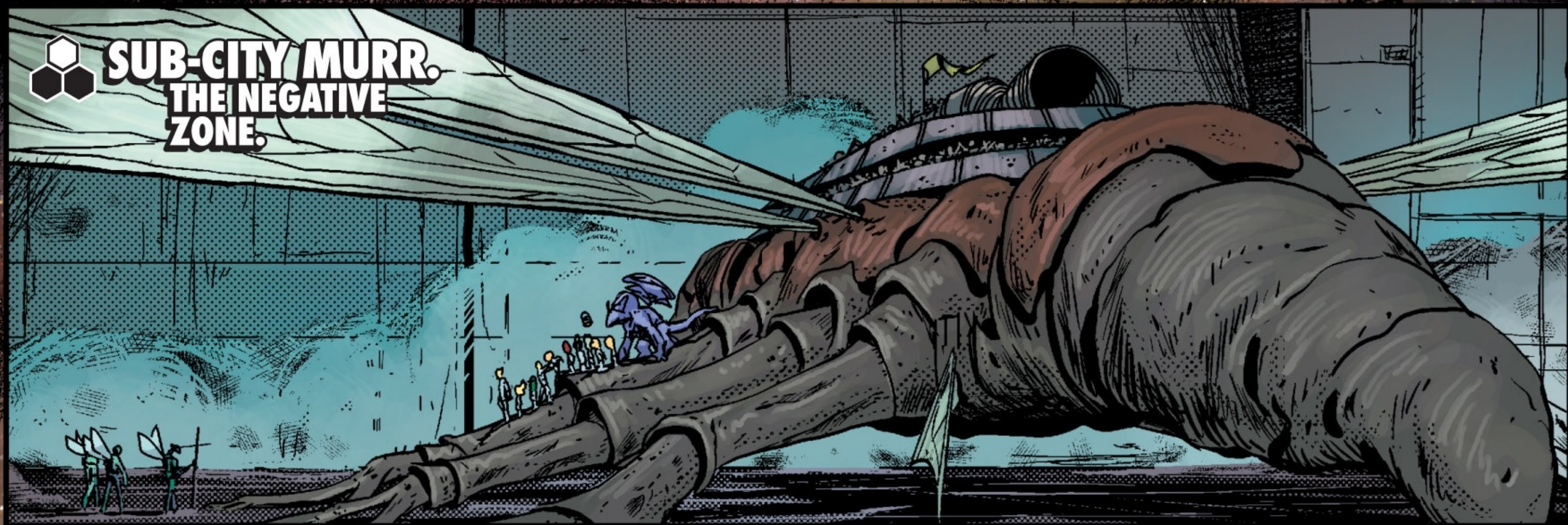








SUB-CITY MURR. THE NEGATIVE ZONE.



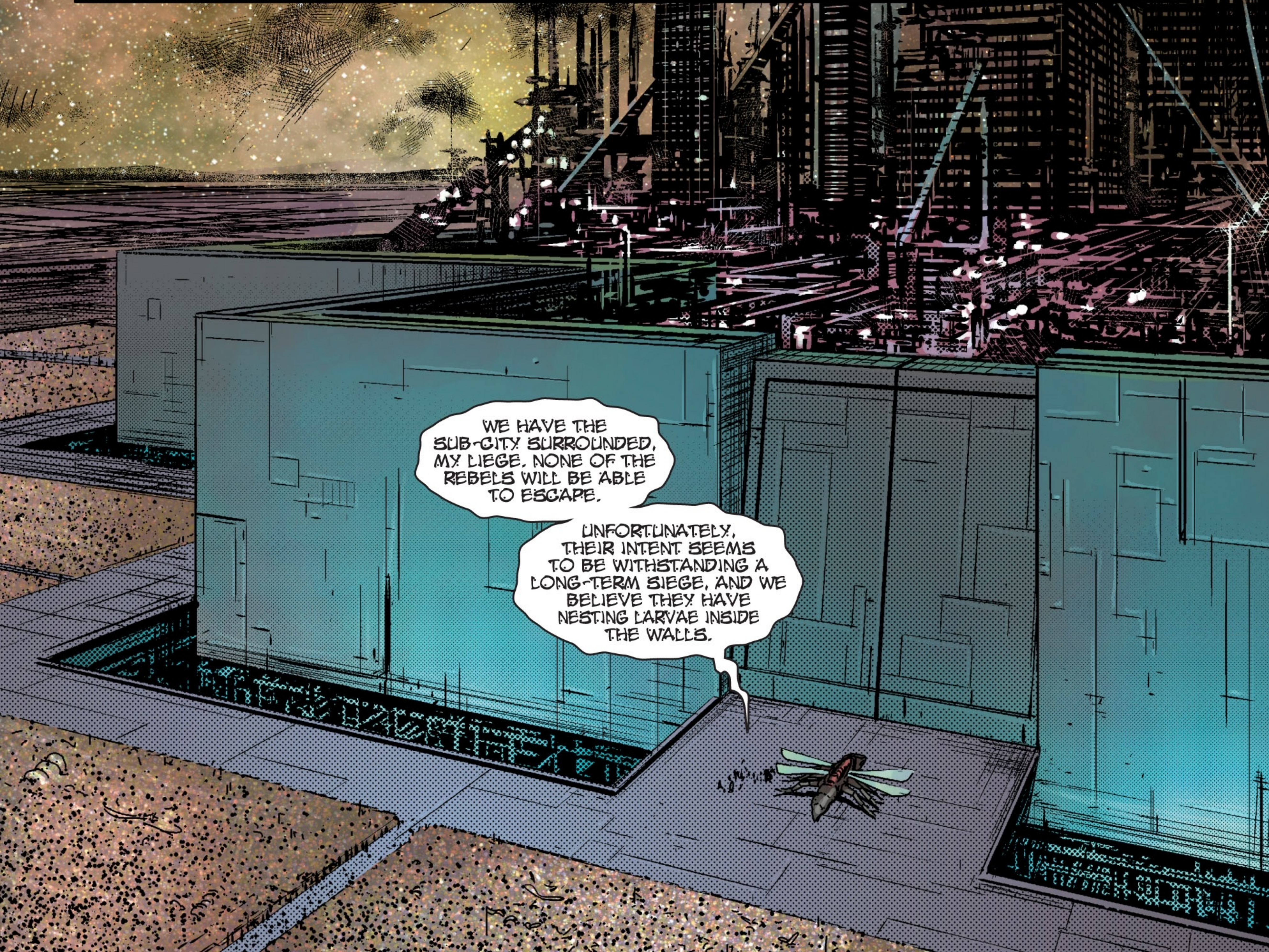
WELCOME,
HONORED WARLORD.
YOUR BRILLIANCE BLINDS
THE UNWORTHY. THE
HUMBLED BOW BEFORE
YOUR MAJESTY--

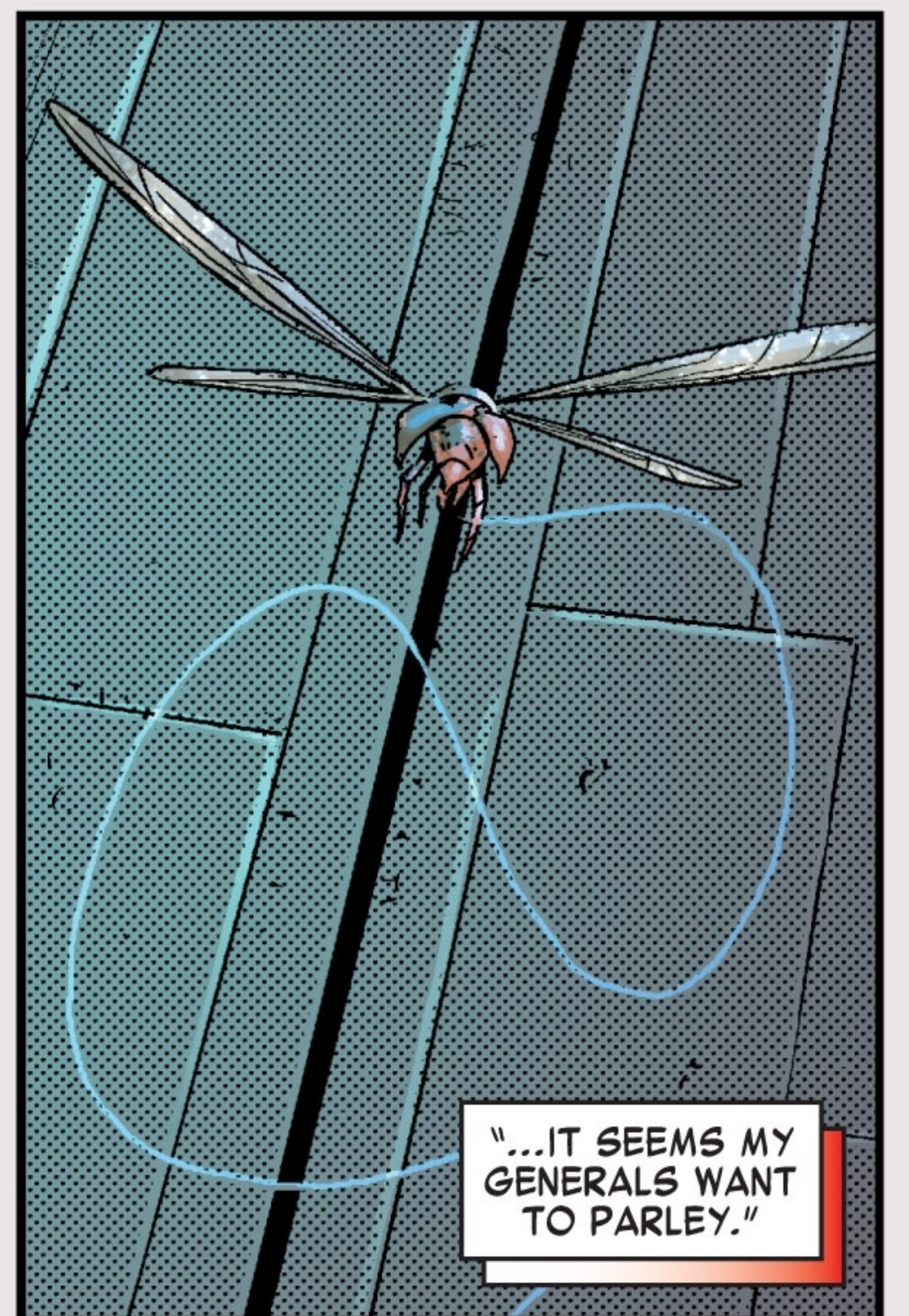
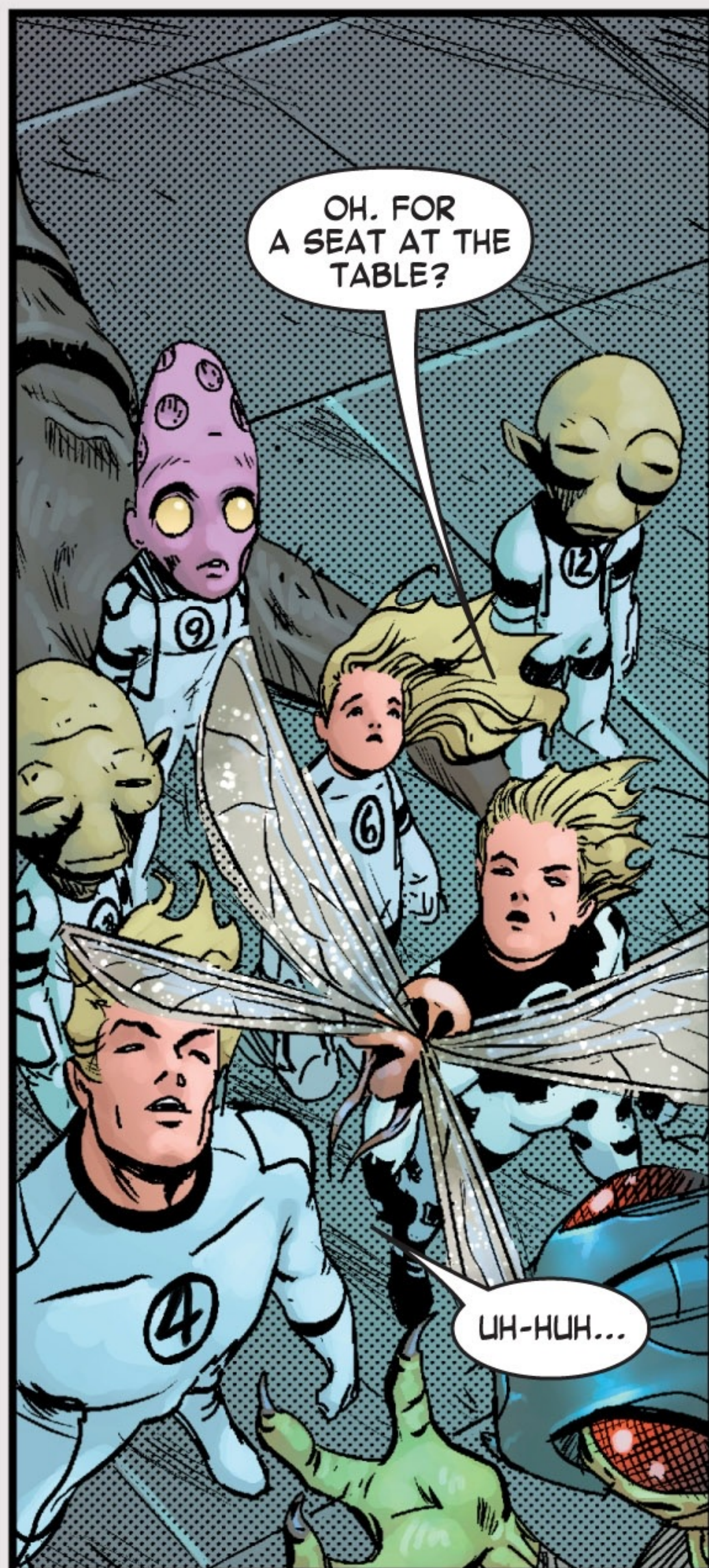
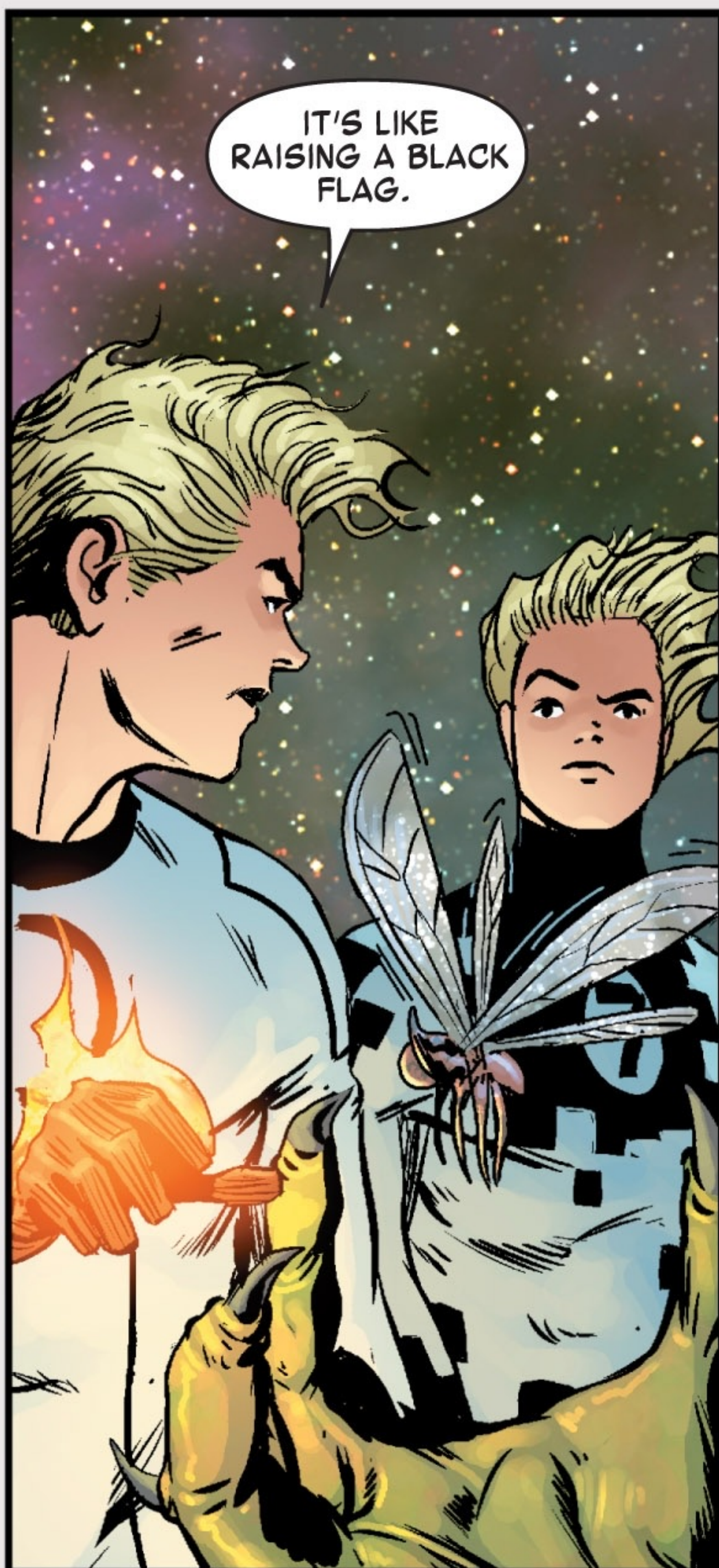
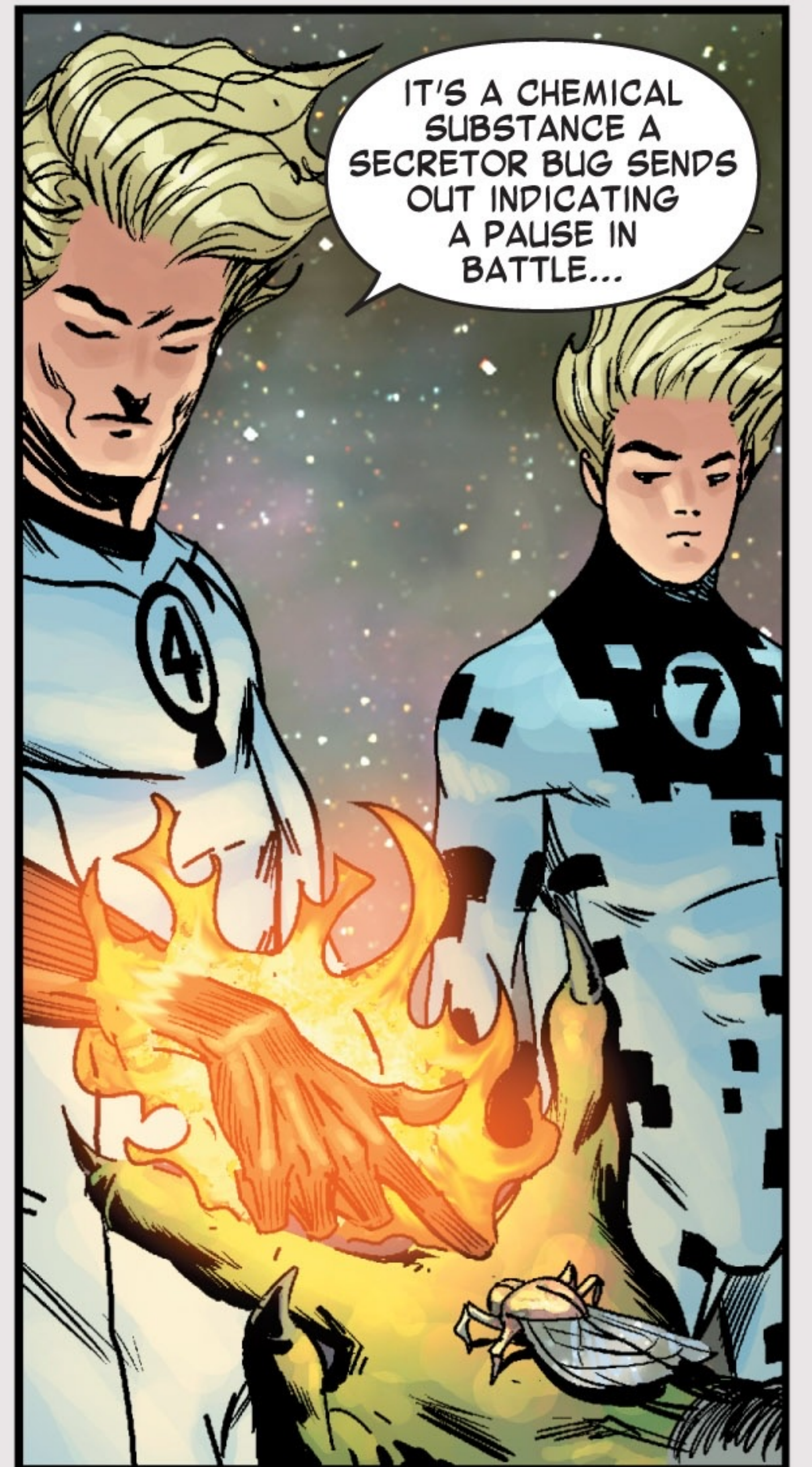
YEAH,
YEAH...GIVE ME THE
BAD NEWS.

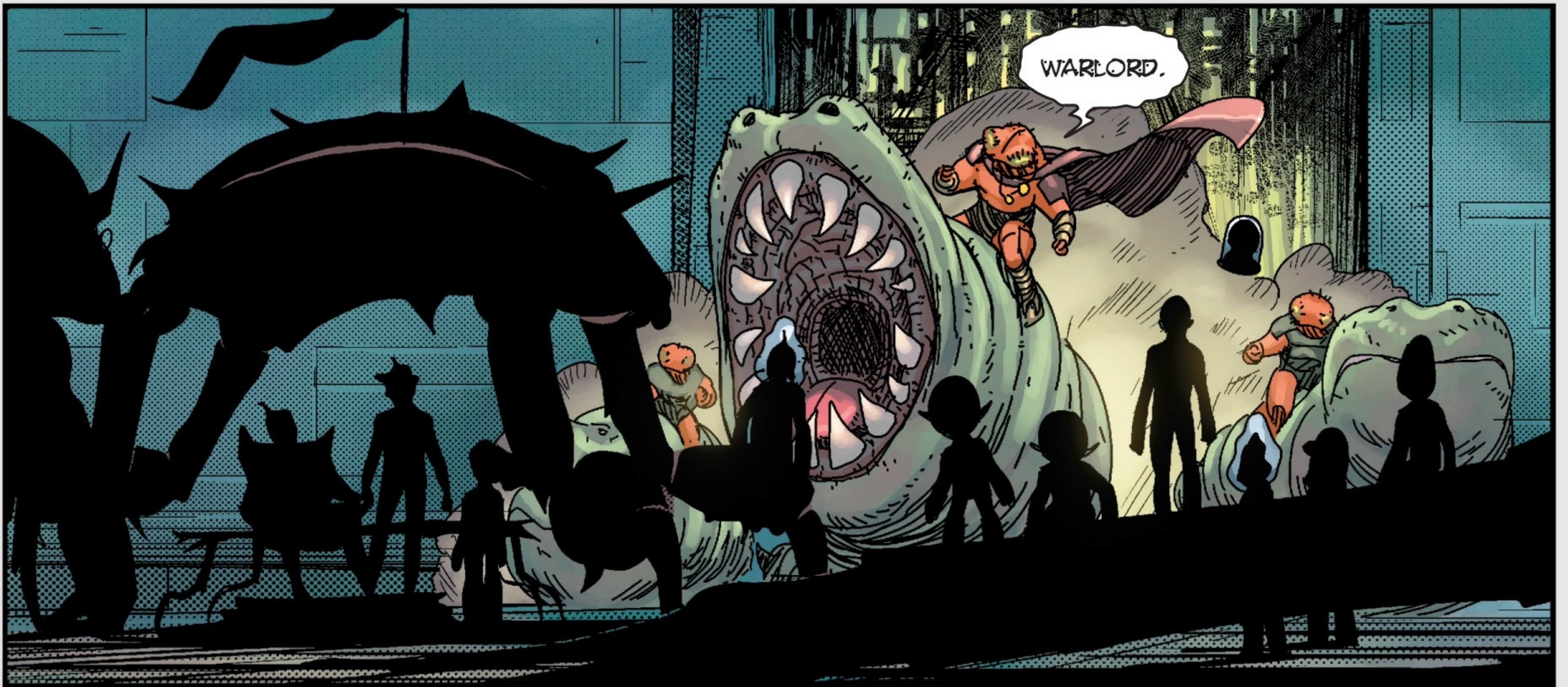
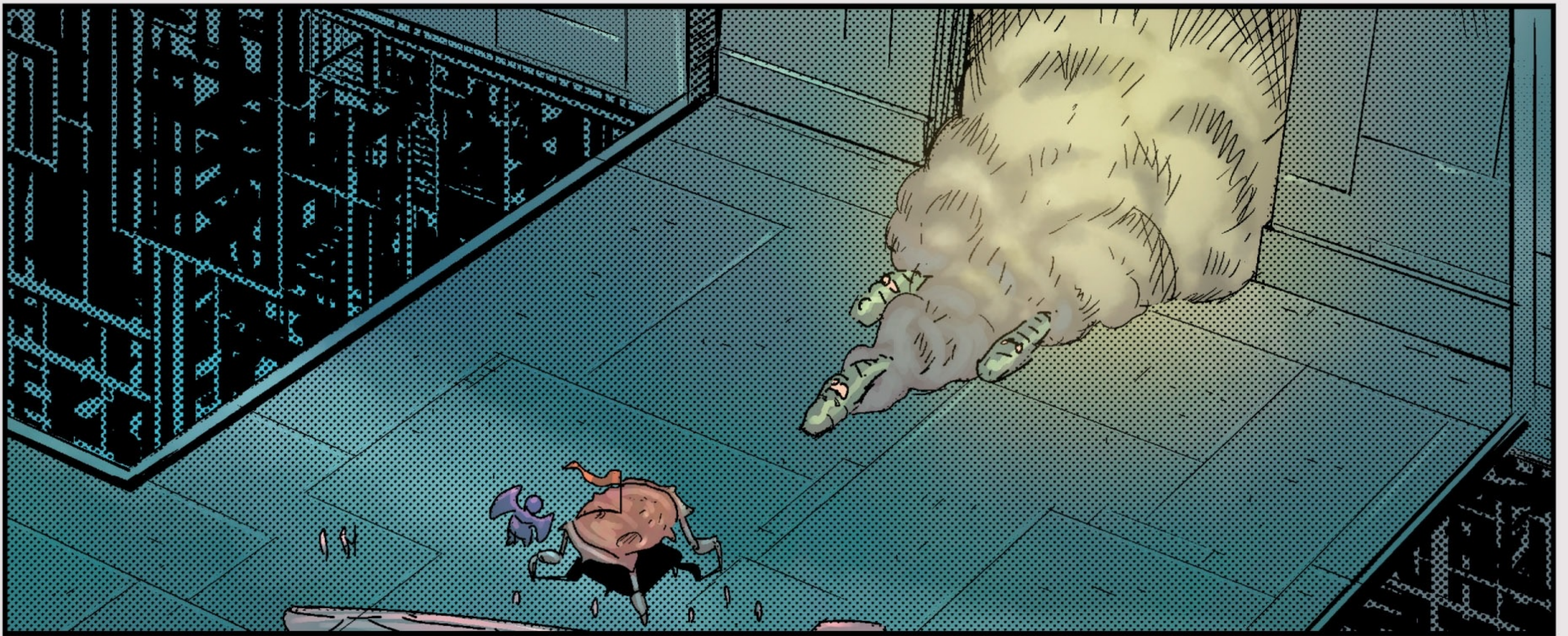
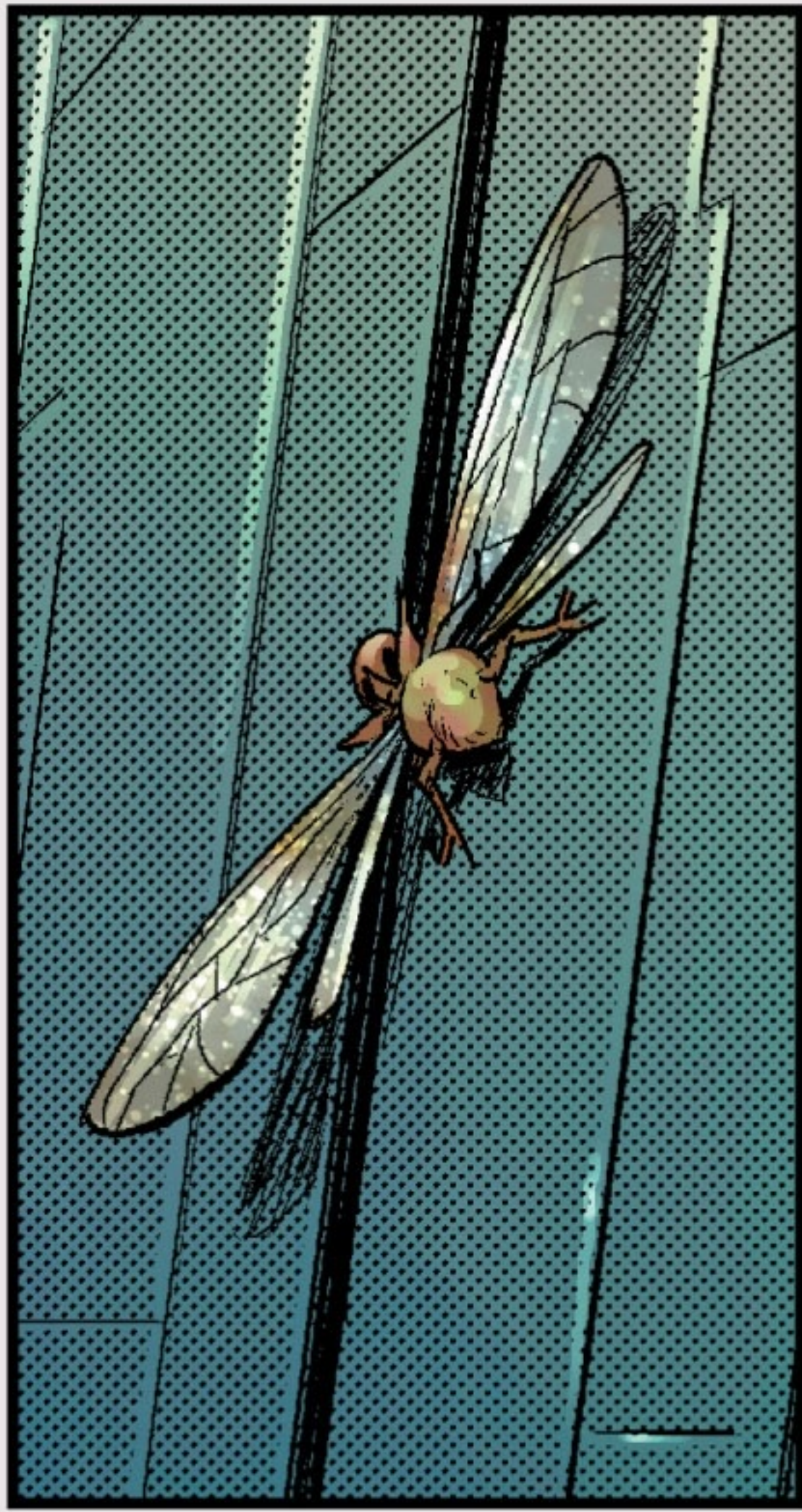


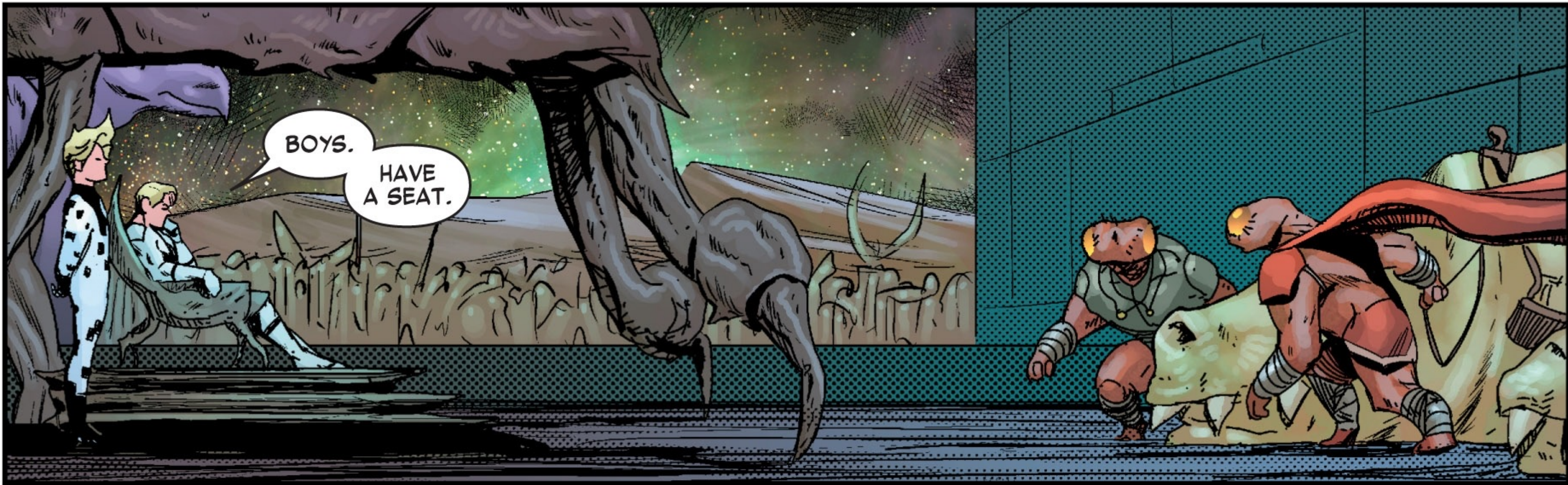
WE HAVE THE
SUB-CITY SURROUNDED,
MY LIEGE. NONE OF THE
REBELS WILL BE ABLE
TO ESCAPE.

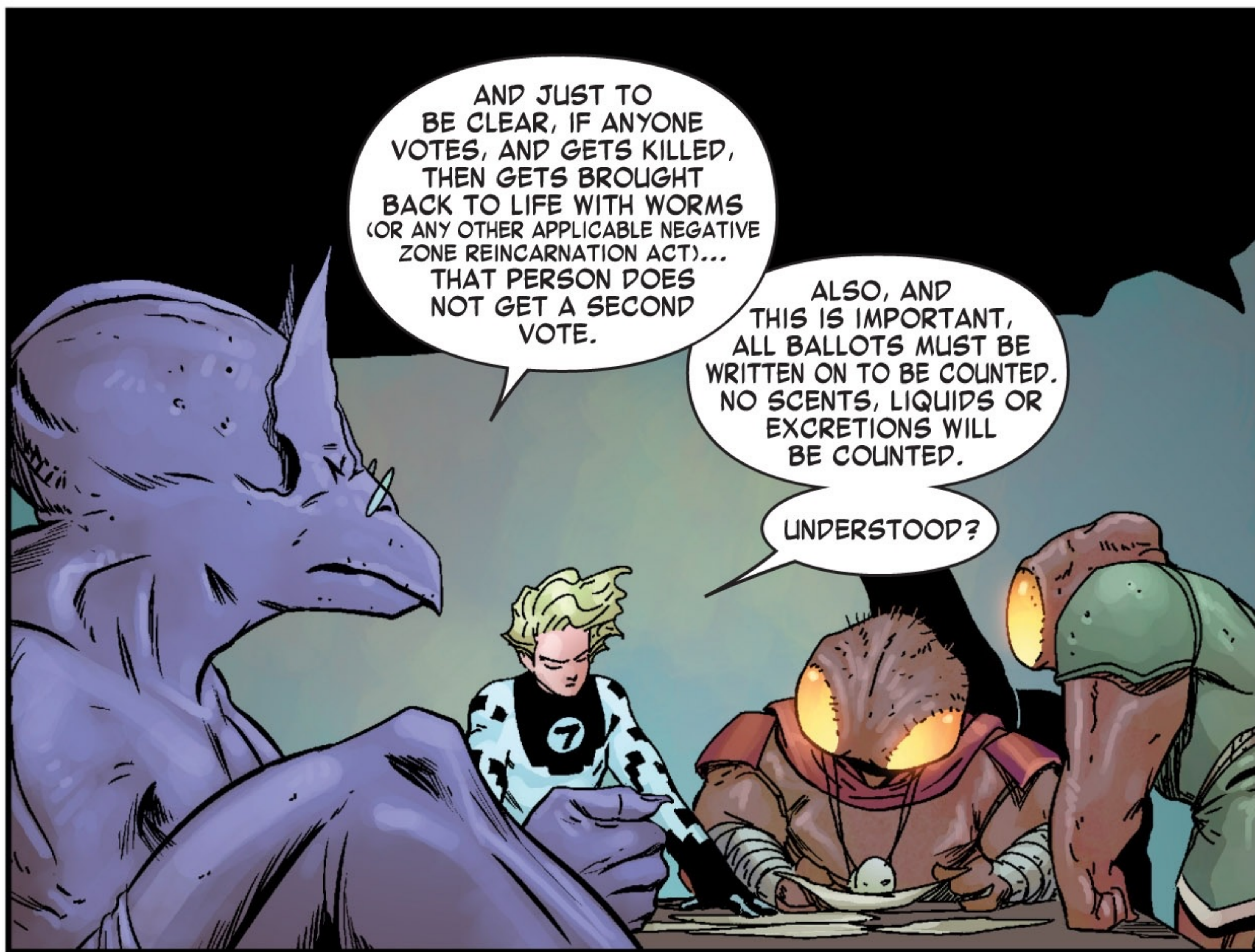
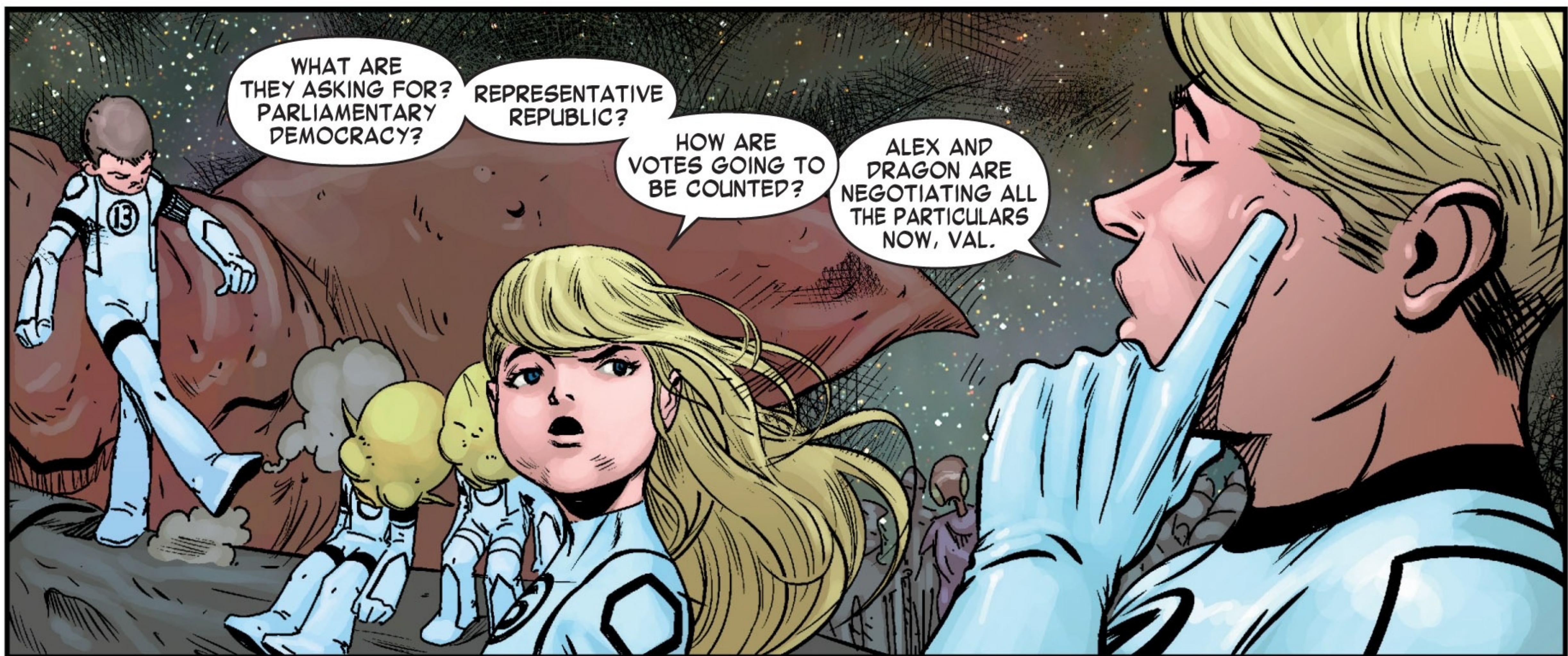
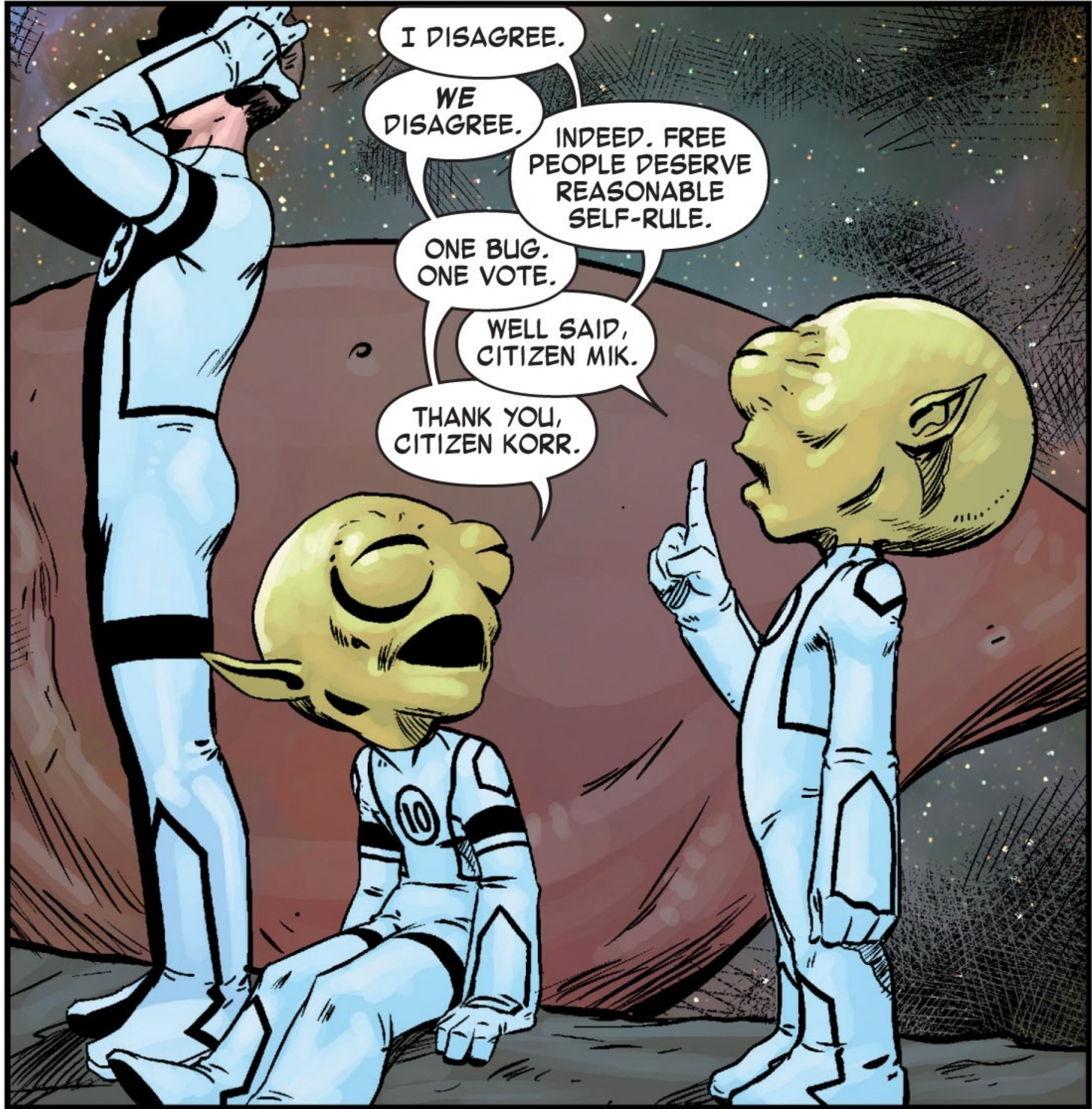
UNFORTUNATELY,
THEIR INTENT SEEMS
TO BE WITHSTANDING A
LONG-TERM SIEGE, AND WE
BELIEVE THEY HAVE
NESTING LARVAE INSIDE
THE WALLS.

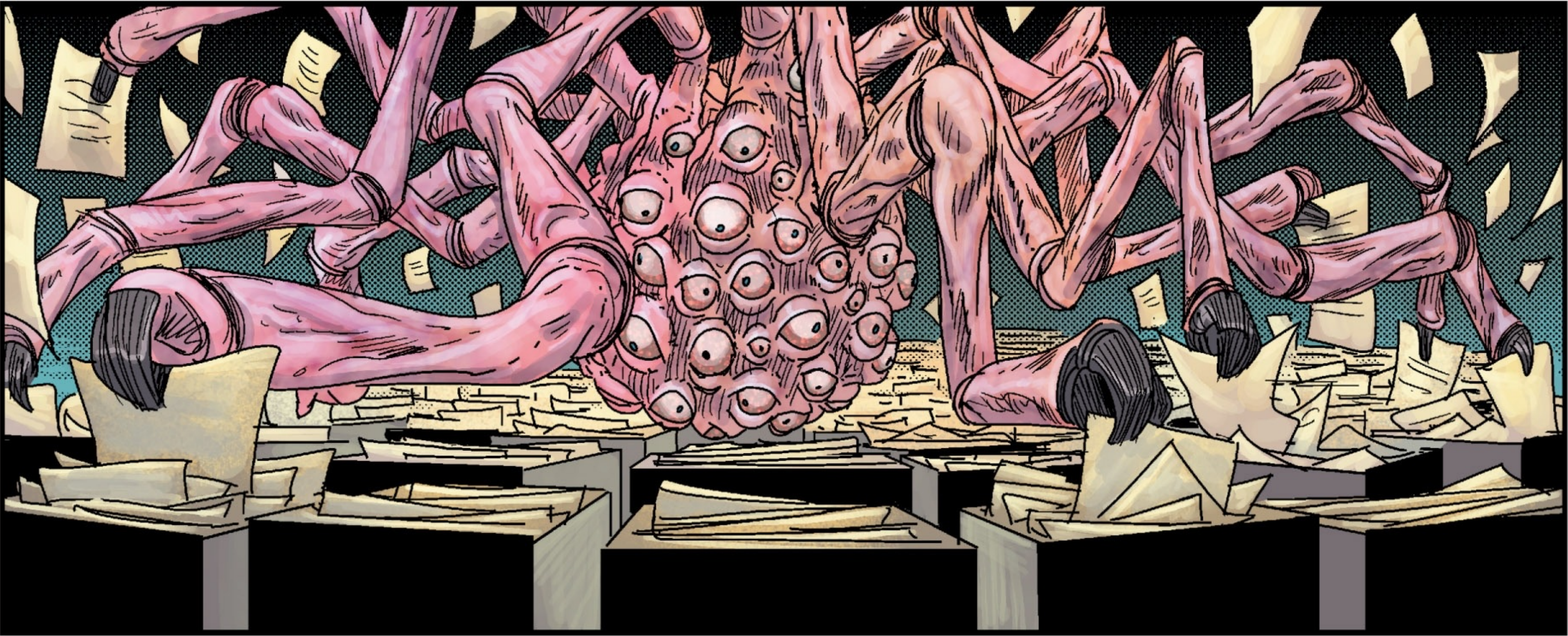
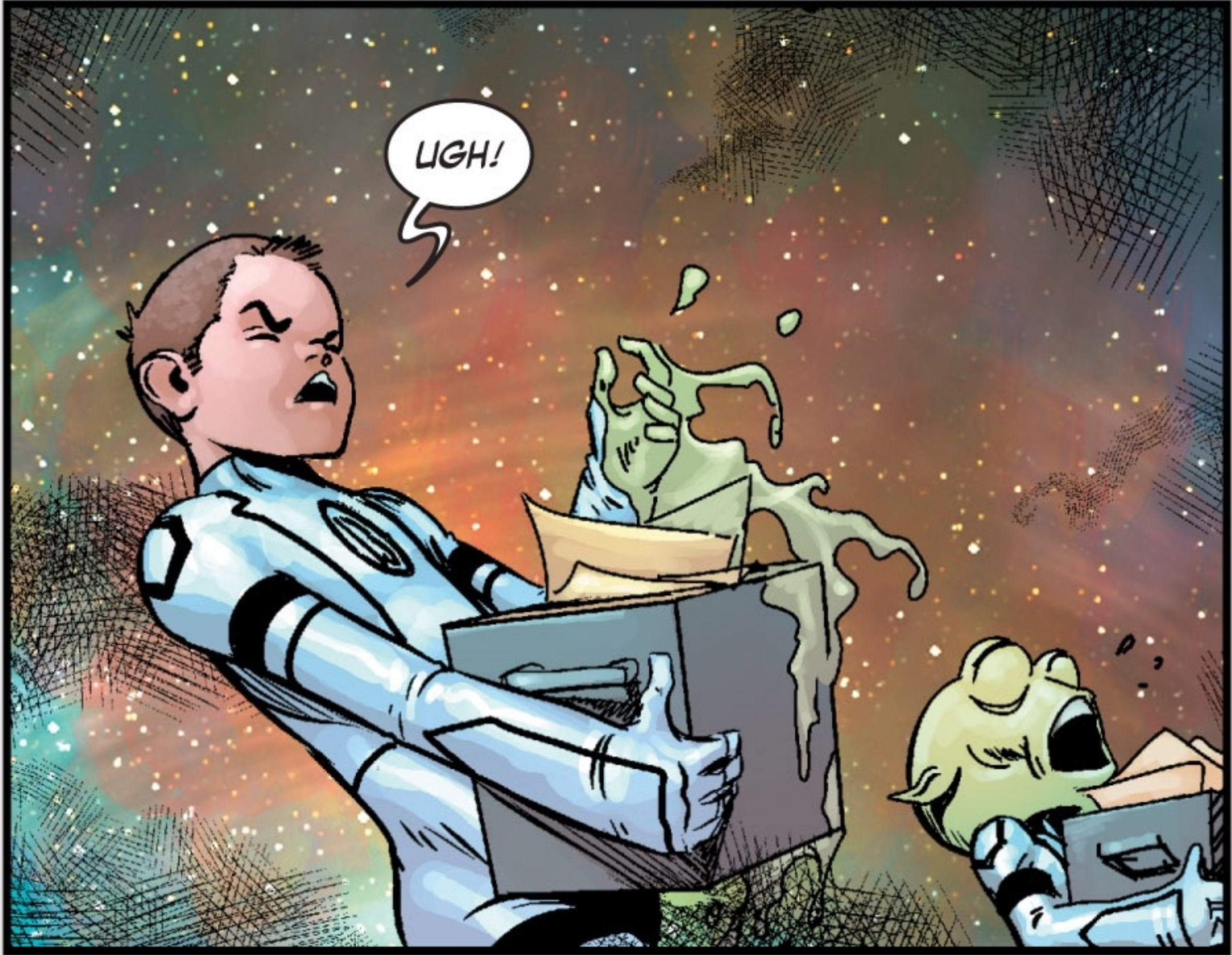
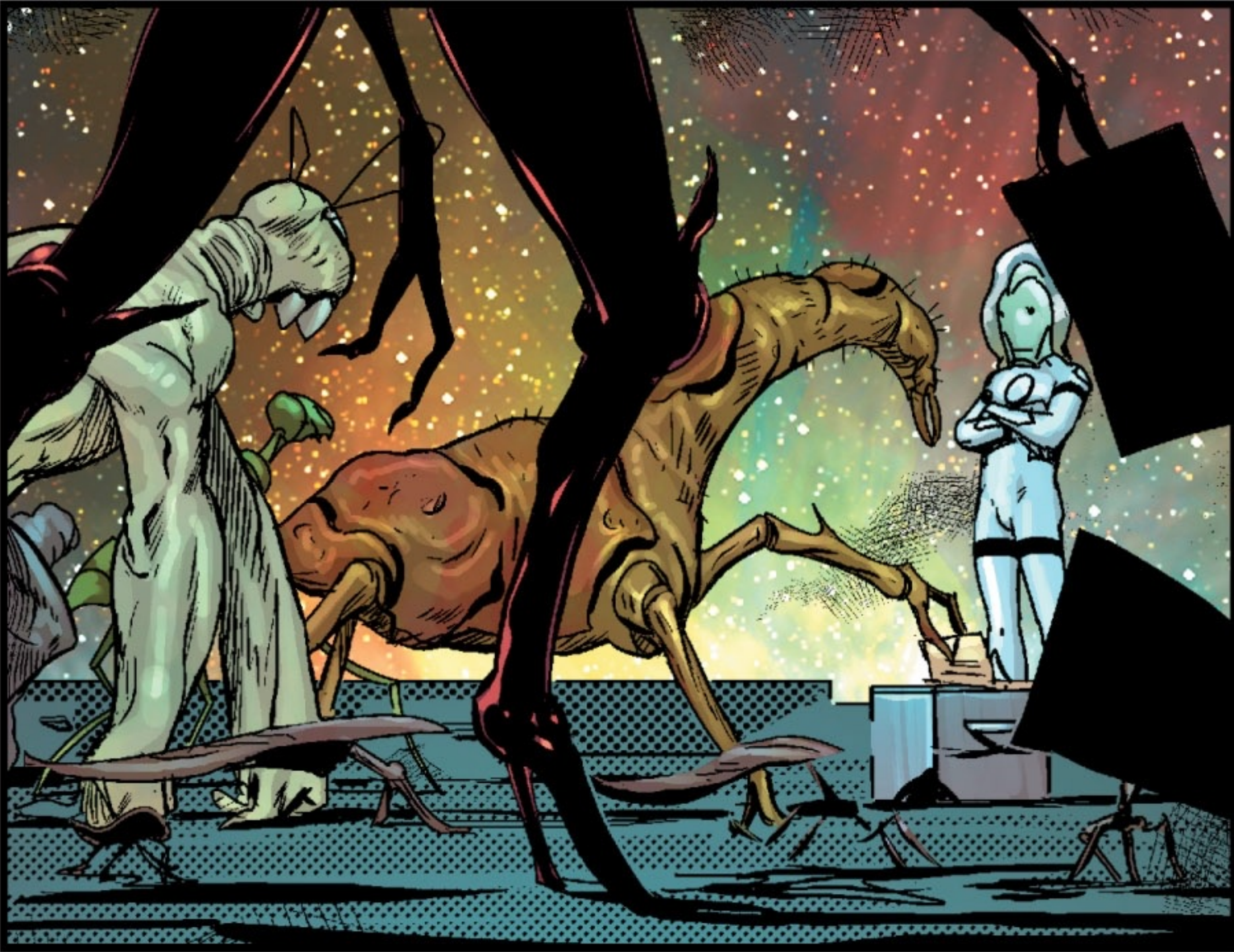
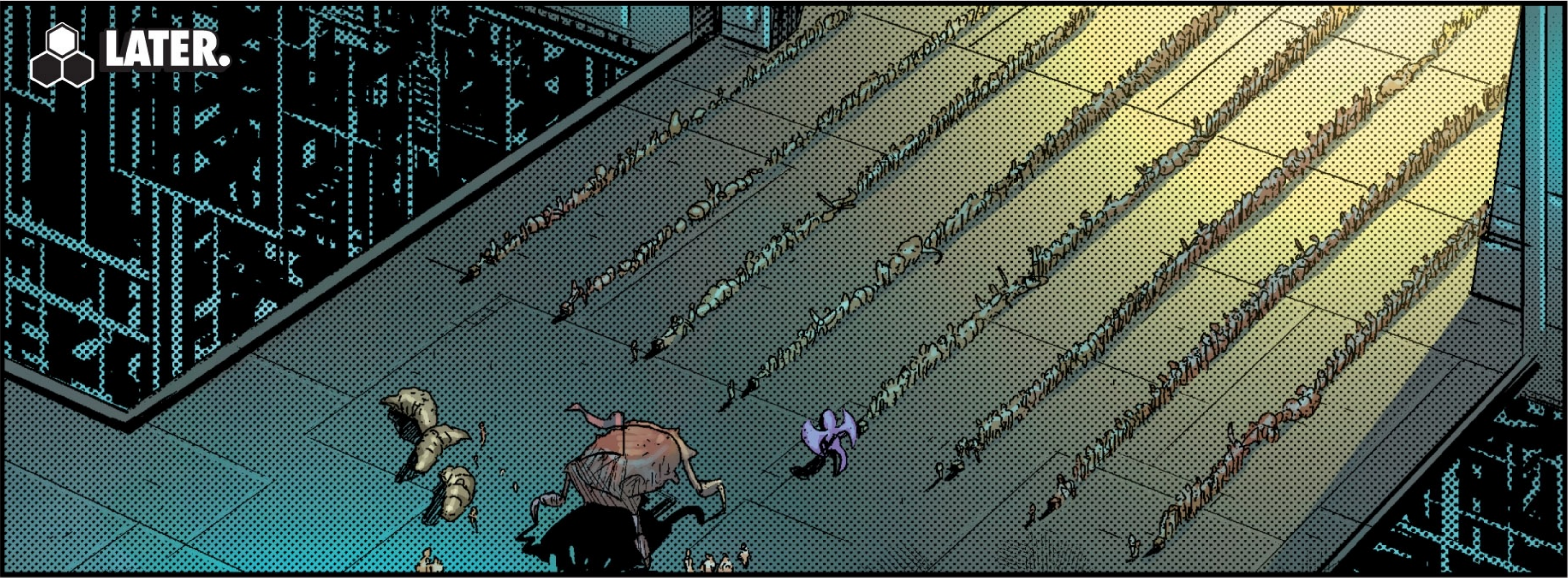


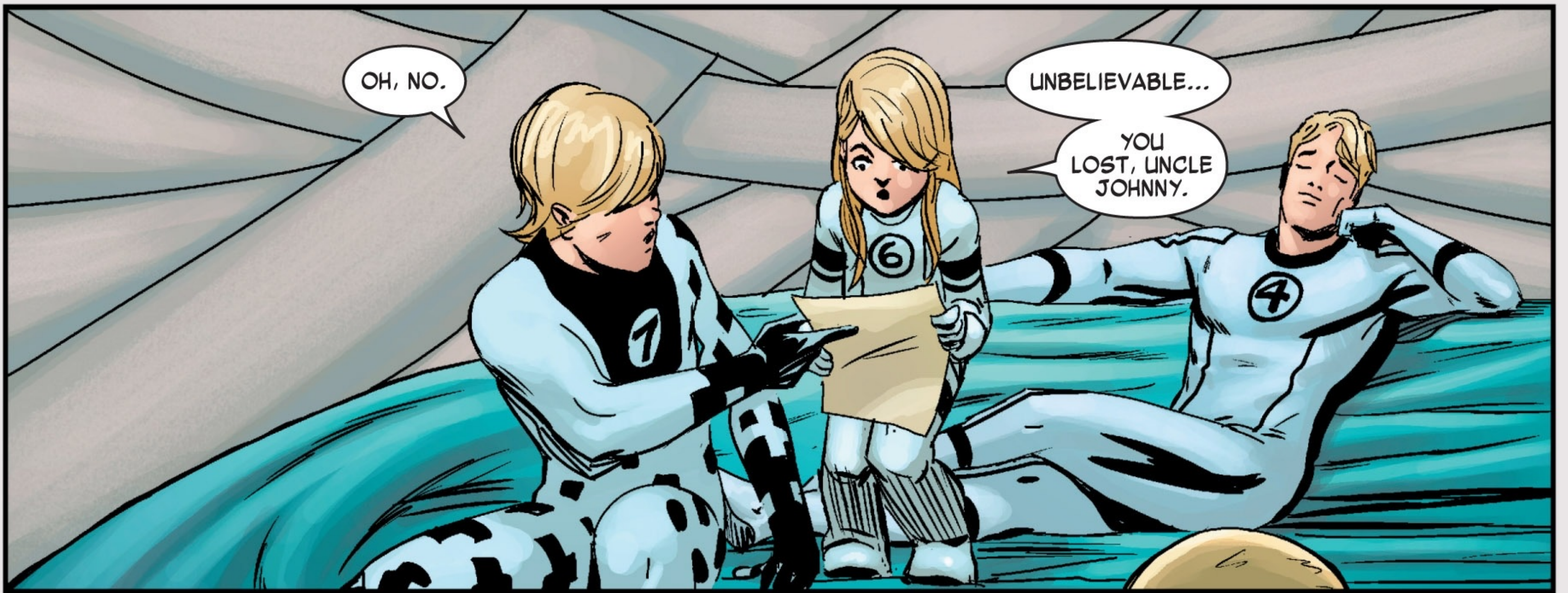
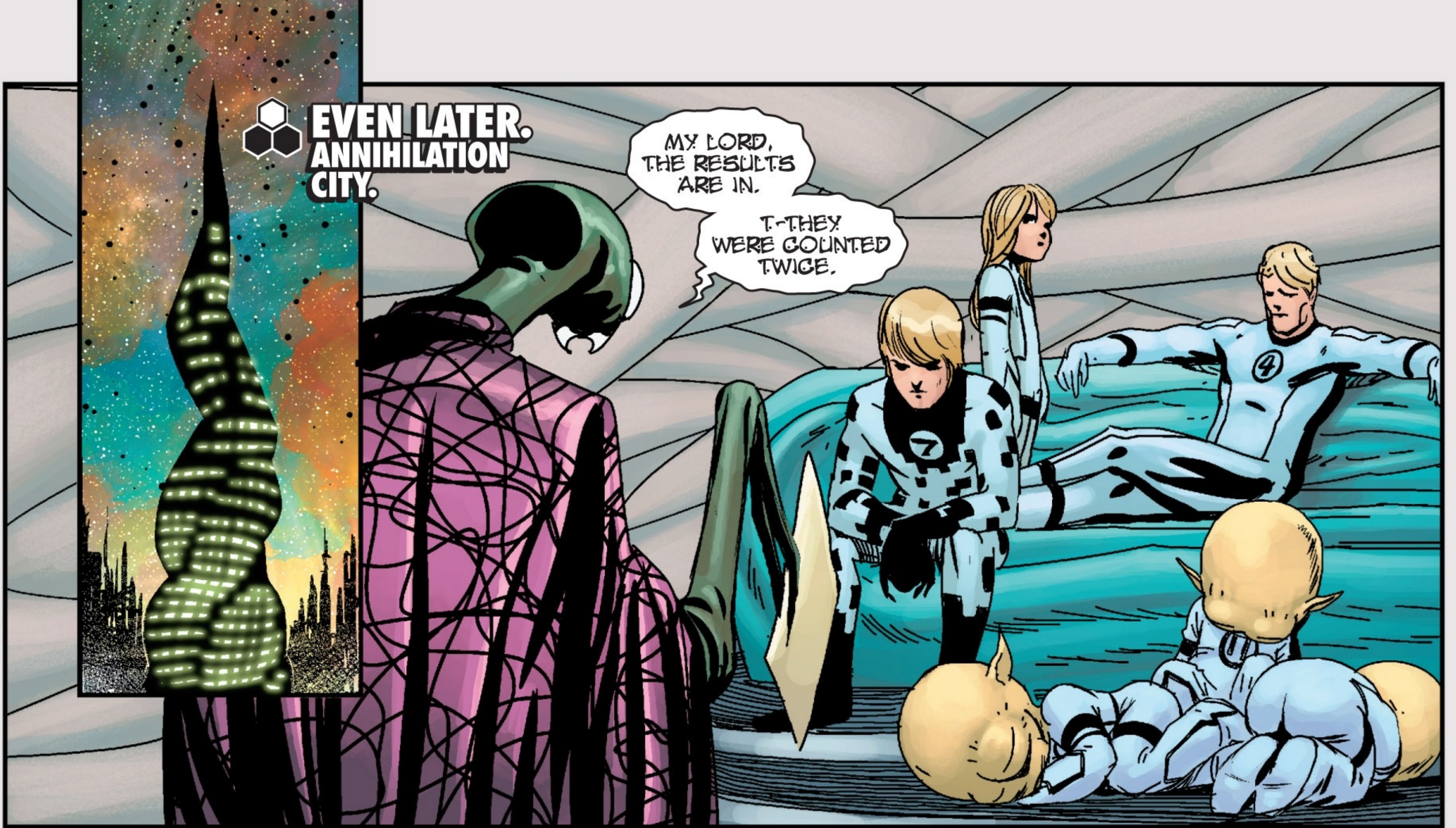


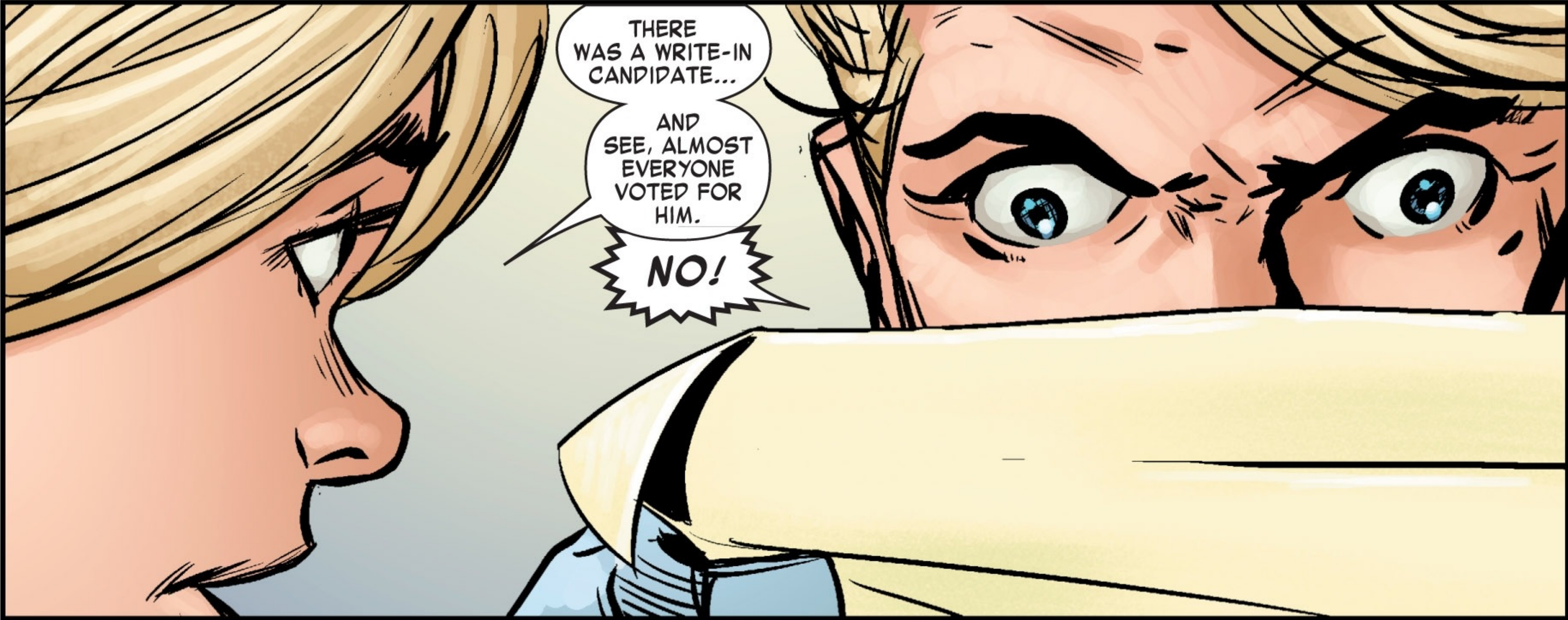








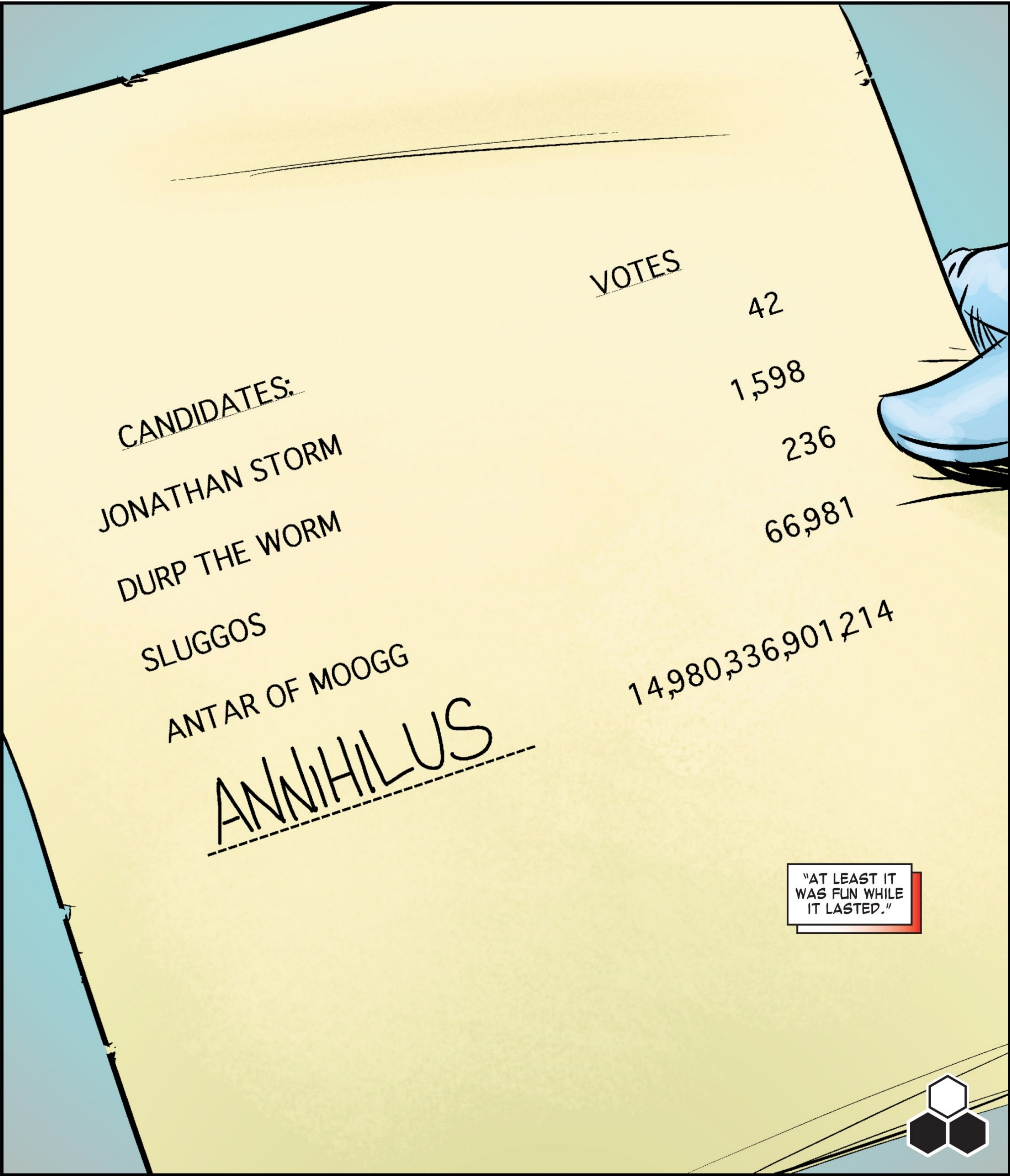




THERE WAS A WRITE-IN CANDIDATE...

AND SEE, ALMOST EVERYONE VOTED FOR HIM.

NO!



CANDIDATES:

JONATHAN STORM

DURP THE WORM

SLUGGOS

ANTAR OF MOOGG

ANNIHILUS

VOTES

42

1,598

236

66,981

14,980,336,901,214

"AT LEAST IT WAS FUN WHILE IT LASTED."



FANTASTIC FAN PAGE 4

Howdy again, FF Fanatics! Lots of opinions to share this month, so let's get to it!

I have been a fan and collector since #1. I am overjoyed to see the true sci-fi angle and character involvement. Galactus vs Celestials... WELL DONE!

John Pasquale
New York, NY

Glad you've been enjoying it, John!

Hello,

I just wanted to say that I've really enjoyed Hickman's run on all the FF titles. I haven't read anyone like him since the 1980s Claremont X-MEN run. Your writing is out of this world, literally, I am amazed at your story lines and the depth of each character. Please stay on FF as long as possible. Also, I enjoyed Bobillo's art.

Best,
Thomas Patrick Huston

Kind words, Thomas! Thanks for them—we appreciate it!

Jonathan Hickman's writing style can sometimes be described as a slow burn, but now the wick has burned out and the dynamite has exploded. This issue is where all of the planning, conversations and positioning of past issues turn into epic battles, fiery explosions, and game-changing events. It's a credit to Hickman that he has elevated the Fantastic Four to such heights that even the Avengers assembled together in all of their might are hoping Reed Richards will find a way to save them.

There are cosmic entities and alien warships wreaking havoc in this issue, but it is Sue Storm who steals the best moment of the book with an impressive display of her powers. Action for the sake of action is a bore, but Hickman has crafted her character arc in a way that makes her unloading on a Kree boarding party as satisfying as it is bad ass. What's incredible about this story is that it reaches an extraordinary climax that would surely be the final act in anyone else's hands, but Hickman uses it to set the stage for an even higher level of conflict via the events in FF #14, a must-read for anyone following this title.

Bringing this blockbuster issue to life is Barry Kitson. Theaters are pushing 3D movies hard right now, but audiences would be better off taking a gander at Kitson's imagery that leaps off the page with astonishing impact. There are more than a few breathtaking images in this single issue -- Kree soldiers jetpacking through space, a certain cosmic being making a stunning entrance, and more -- and they are all handled with a perfect sense of scale and pacing so that they build on each other until the jaw-dropping end.

Sincerely,
Colten Stokes

I'm beginning to get the sneaking suspicion that you liked the issue, Colten!

Hi,

YAY !!!!! We finally have two titles based on the World's Greatest family. I am glad to see the Human Torch is back. He has finally changed and I hope this new mature Johnny Storm is here for good. Love to see him lead as well since there are two Fantastic Four titles now.

Love to see different adventures always done in both books. Have the Human Torch from time to time lead a group of FF team members into action. It's time the Fantastic Four membership continued to grow, especially in the FF (Future Foundation) book. Who knows, maybe this new Johnny Storm should get a shot at his own book. I love the increase in the way he uses his powers now. I hope you guys continue to show this Human Torch's powers & abilities are different from other past Human Torches.

It's time you guys started giving each member a limited series of their own. How about it? Love to see the Invisible Woman in action on her own, using her powers in so many amazing ways. As well, let's see what her past teachers have taught her in combat skills. For Sue has been taught by Iron Fist, and also by Spider-Man, Captain America too. Love to see a major villain or villainess clash against The Invisible Woman in a storyline that would knock our socks off.

Love to see Franklin Richards' powers be reborn, and this time don't take them away. It's time The Psi-Lord started to earn his future codename slowly.

Long live the Fantastic Four! Issue #602 was great!

King Jason
San Francisco, CA. 94102

No immediate plans to do limited series starring all of the members of the FF—we have a tough enough time getting two books to the printer every month! As for Franklin's powers, there's more to come, particularly in the pages of FF!

The contents of FANTASTIC FOUR #603 were so epic that the Kree have a poem about it*:

*Heaven shook, and the mighty gods did bleed,
Annihilation Wave answered to Reed!
Richards and his family caused such strife,
Galactus fell — Supremor kept his life.*

*The Kree poets obviously have their biases.

Jeremy Beebe
Kansas City, MO

***There once was a fan from Missouri
Who attempted to write with such fury
That he laid down a rhyme
Now we hope that his crime
Is proved innocent by the Grand Jury***

Dear FF

This is my first letter to you in 30 years of reading Marvel.

Barbados. 1982. I was a kid and had never read a super hero comic book before. I had read ARCHIE, TINTIN, but Marvel? Hmm. I saw on the newsstand the World's Greatest Comic Magazine. I had to pick it up. It was the most amazing thing I had ever read. I couldn't wait for the next one, my heart was beating so fast. I've been reading, buying and collecting your comics for 30 years with FF and Spidey being the main titles. I tried writing to you before there was Internet from the Caribbean. I didn't get through. I also thought that by the time the mail arrives the letter at the back referring to issue #267 was now in issue #280 and didn't make sense anymore.

Now, my humble opinion: What's missing from FANTASTIC FOUR is heart. Real emotion (as opposed to by the numbers). What is missing from FF for years is HUMANITY!

I feel nothing reading these pages anymore. A few years ago I read Marvel Knights when FF was going through struggles of being people. The writing was heartfelt, real, and believable. I began to care about them again. It was stunning. The man on the ledge and Reed stops to talk with him. Humanity. Now it's empty. Vacuous. Why is Spider-Man there? In AVENGERS it makes sense. But why is a guy who spins webs and climbs walls...IN SPACE!?? Against...Galactus??! Celestials? Really?

I'm reading FF now out of a strained sense of loyalty to John Byrne and company and those who came just before and just after. Why don't I feel anything anymore? Have I outgrown FF? The Celestials pop out of the sky? I don't care. Galactus shows up? I don't care. Johnny comes back from the dead? Sigh. Way too soon. I get that people can't stay dead anymore, but at least make it count for something. When Reed "died" in the '80s, I felt something. Now when they are overthinking some inane thing with technobabble, it bores me (And I love technobabble!) When they are punching some random inane being, I just skip a page forward. It bores. Johnny comes back from the dead and Franklin greets him like he just got back from the mall.

What is going on? It all seems so rote and by the numbers. It seems only cerebral. Grandpa Richards shows up. Spider-Man stands around. False tension. There are too many silly characters. Some dragon, some devil kid, Valeria overly precocious-- My God. Clean house. Get rid of all these silly characters with nothing to do but stand around and bore us. As much as I love Spider-Man, why is he there? We know he's out of his league. Spider-Man versus Galactus? Really? It feels like you are just throwing everything at the wall sometimes.

When I was 11 or 12 I started a comic book library in my backyard in the Caribbean. My friend and I put up a sign in the neighborhood. Rode our bikes around marketing our comic library. *.50 cents or \$1 all the comics you can read.* The kids came in droves and read my comics and my buddy and I put FF and other Marvel books on the lawn. I was happy not for the few cents but because they were sharing in what I loved. I wish I could get back to that place, where I love FF again.

But..um... the art is great.:)

Love and Respect. Thanks for always helping me dream. Make mine Marvel.

P Dewhurst

Well, you can't always please everybody, P, but we appreciate your love and support for all these many years!

Tom B
4/3/12

As always, if you've got an opinion to share, you can e-mail it to us at MHEROES@MARVEL.COM. Be sure to mark your letters as "Okay To Print!" if you'd like to see them featured here on the Fan Page!

**FANTASTIC
FOUR #607**



**HICKMAN
CAMUNCOLI
KESEL
MOUNTS**

COMING SOON!

**HICKMAN
WALTA**

**FF
#19**



HICKMAN • WALTA • PETER

TM

MARVEL

19



AFTER DOOM ATTACKED AND INJURED THE BLACK PANTHER, T'CHALLA'S SISTER SHURI ASSUMED HIS MANTLE AS WELL AS THE THRONE OF THE HYPERADVANCED AFRICAN NATION OF WAKANDA.

REED RICHARDS HAS BEEN SUMMONED TO WAKANDA BY T'CHALLA. AND HE'S BROUGHT THE FUTURE FOUNDATION CLASS ALONG WITH HIM.



REED RICHARDS
MISTER FANTASTIC



SUSAN RICHARDS
INVISIBLE WOMAN



JOHNNY STORM
THE HUMAN TORCH



BENJAMIN GRIMM
THE THING



VALERIA RICHARDS



FRANKLIN RICHARDS



ALEX POWER



DRAGON MAN



WU & VIL



MIK, KORR & TURG



TONG



LEECH



ARTIE



BENTLEY



FUTURE FRANKLIN
RICHARDS

WRITER: **JONATHAN HICKMAN**
ARTIST: **GABRIEL HERNANDEZ WALTA**
COLOR ARTIST: **CRIS PETER**
LETTERER: **VC's CLAYTON COWLES**
COVER ARTISTS: **MIKE CHOI & GURU e-FX**
ASSISTANT EDITOR: **JAKE THOMAS**
ASSOCIATE EDITOR: **LAUREN SANKOVITCH**
EDITOR: **TOM BREVOORT**

EDITOR IN CHIEF: AXEL ALONSO
CHIEF CREATIVE OFFICER: JOE QUESADA
PUBLISHER: DAN BUCKLEY
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: ALAN FINE



WAKANDA.



RUMBLE



RUMBLE



RUMBLE



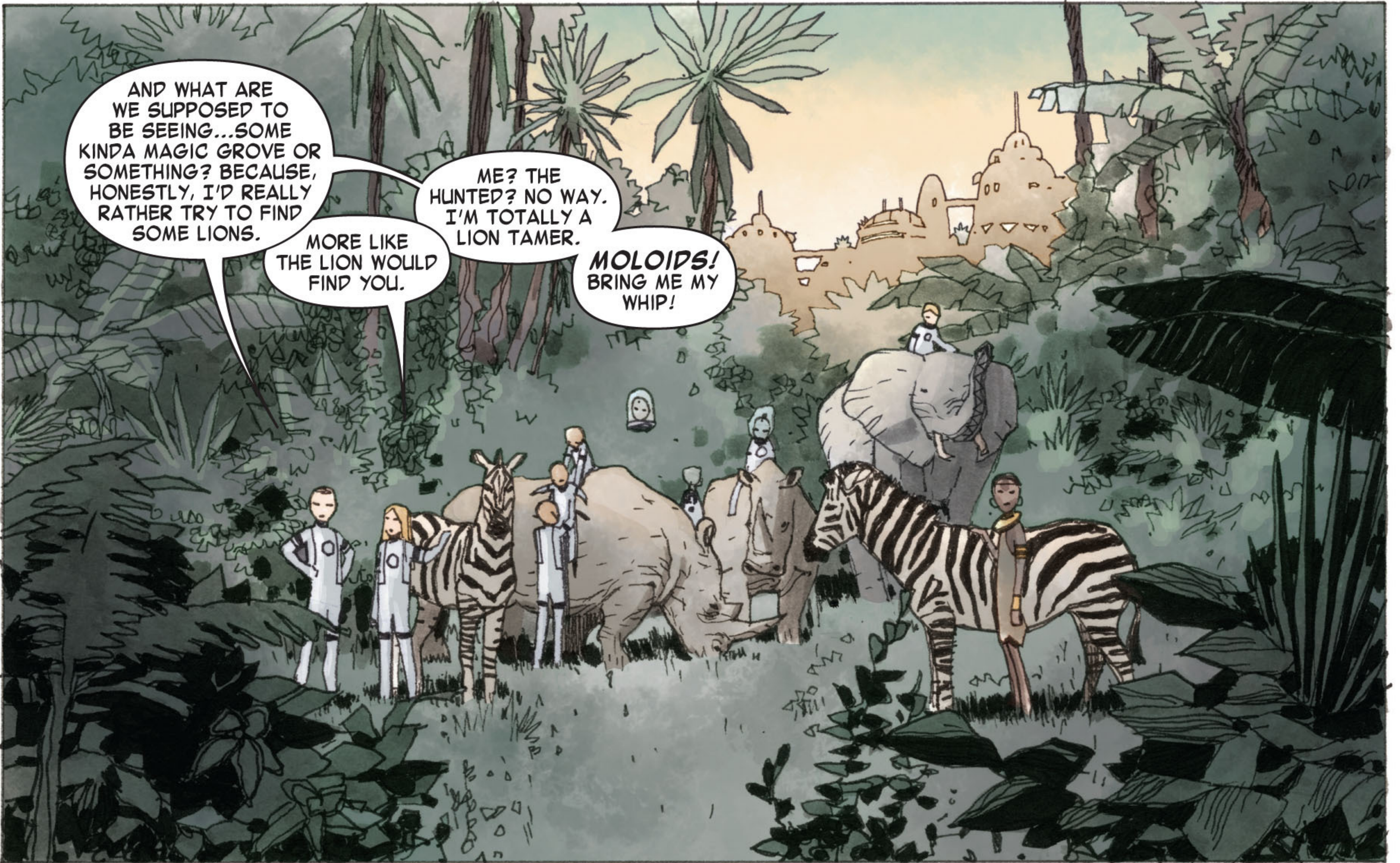


WHEOOOOO!



WE'LL STOP
RIGHT UP HERE
A WAYS...

PAST THE
CLEARING.



AND WHAT ARE
WE SUPPOSED TO
BE SEEING...SOME
KINDA MAGIC GROVE OR
SOMETHING? BECAUSE,
HONESTLY, I'D REALLY
RATHER TRY TO FIND
SOME LIONS.

MORE LIKE
THE LION WOULD
FIND YOU.

ME? THE
HUNTED? NO WAY.
I'M TOTALLY A
LION TAMER.

MOLOIDS!
BRING ME MY
WHIP!



AH, EXCUSE
ME, ONOME, IF
WE'RE MAKING
REQUESTS...

I BELIEVE
THIS MAGNIFICENT
BEAST COULD DO
WITH SOME
WATER.

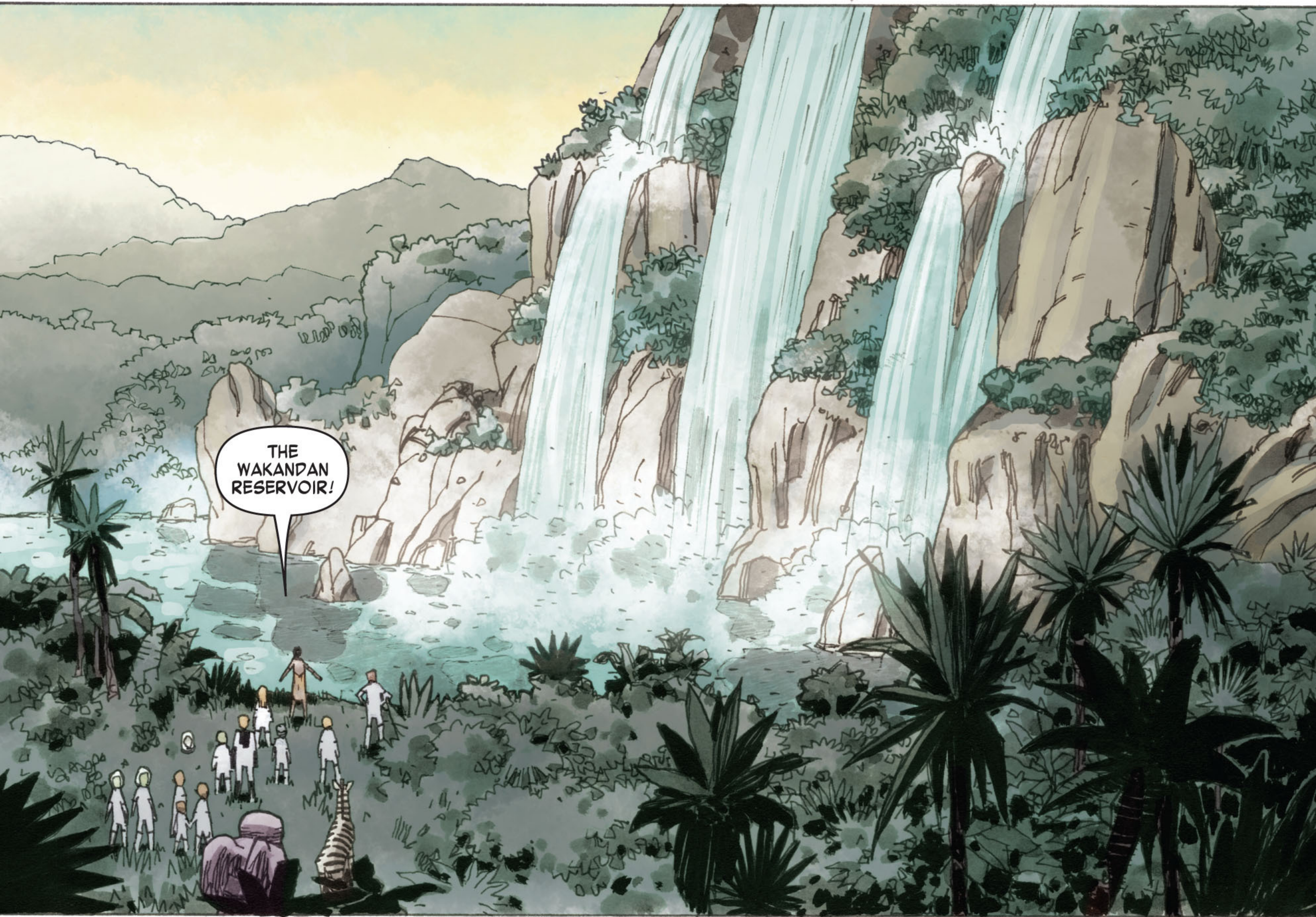


THEN
YOU'RE IN
LUCK...

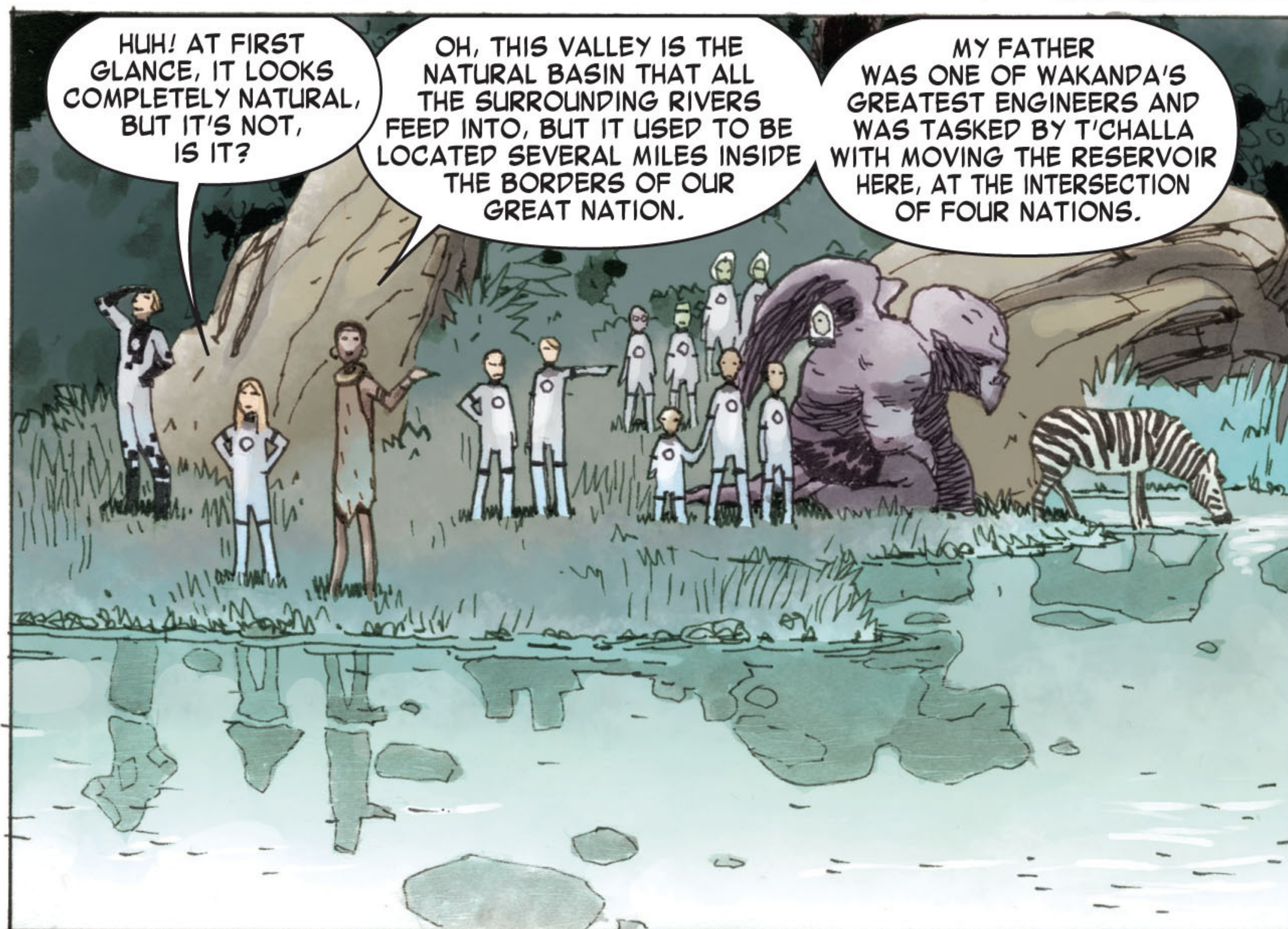
ALL YOU
COULD EVER
NEED IS RIGHT
THROUGH
THERE.



BEHOLD!



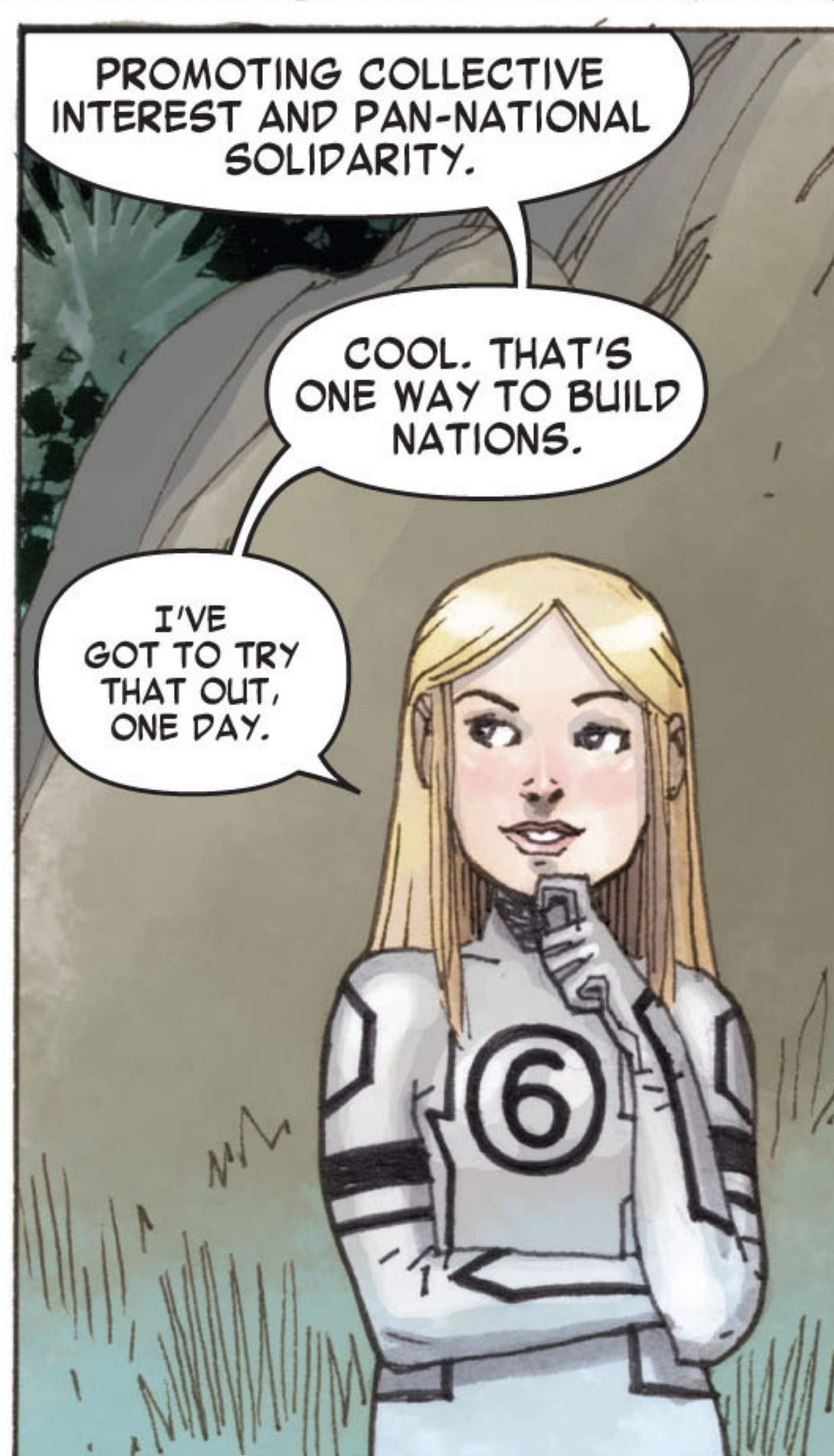
THE
WAKANDAN
RESERVOIR!



HUH! AT FIRST
GLANCE, IT LOOKS
COMPLETELY NATURAL,
BUT IT'S NOT,
IS IT?

OH, THIS VALLEY IS THE
NATURAL BASIN THAT ALL
THE SURROUNDING RIVERS
FEED INTO, BUT IT USED TO BE
LOCATED SEVERAL MILES INSIDE
THE BORDERS OF OUR
GREAT NATION.

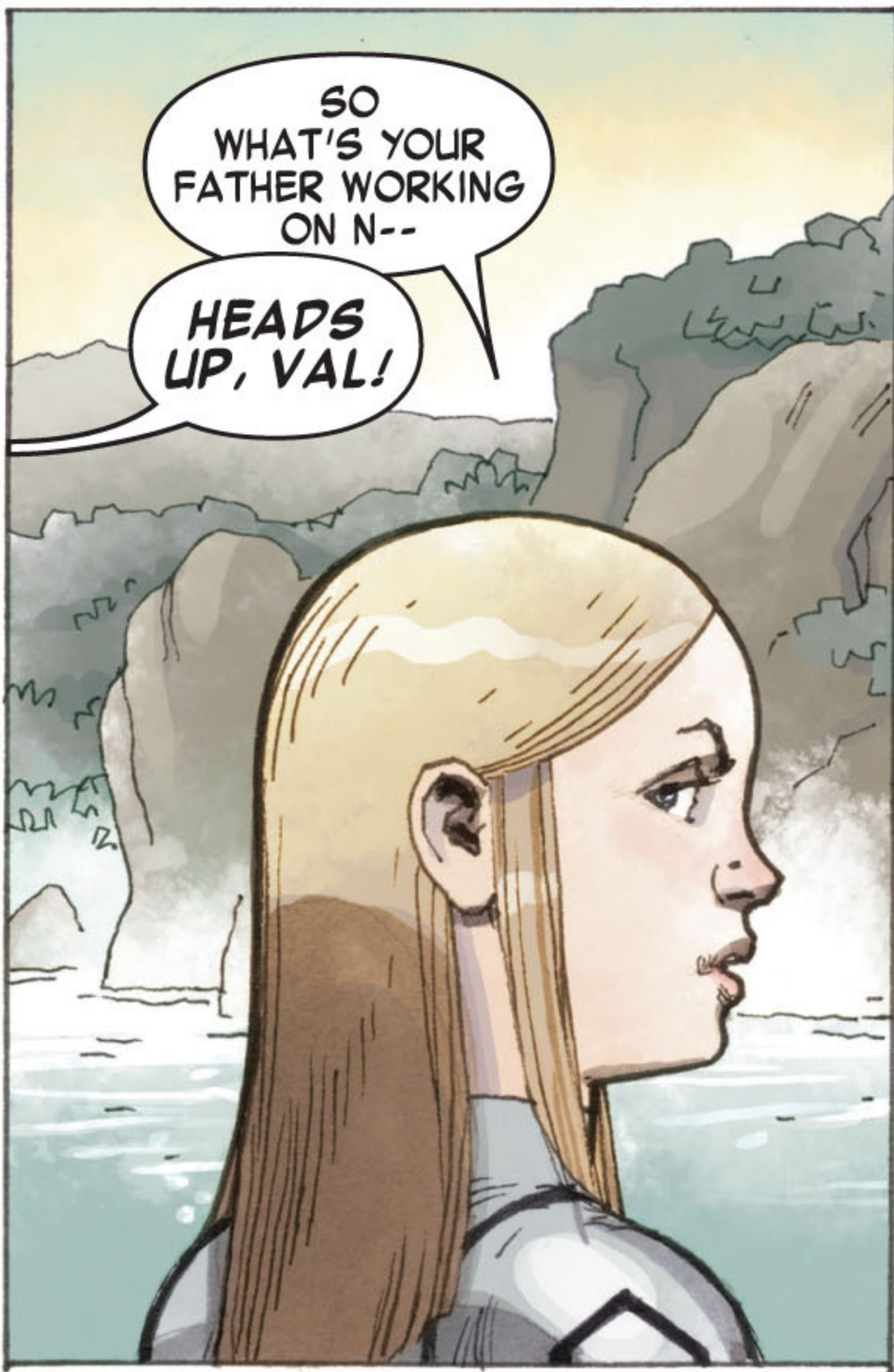
MY FATHER
WAS ONE OF WAKANDA'S
GREATEST ENGINEERS AND
WAS TASKED BY T'CHALLA
WITH MOVING THE RESERVOIR
HERE, AT THE INTERSECTION
OF FOUR NATIONS.



PROMOTING COLLECTIVE
INTEREST AND PAN-NATIONAL
SOLIDARITY.

COOL. THAT'S
ONE WAY TO BUILD
NATIONS.

I'VE
GOT TO TRY
THAT OUT,
ONE DAY.

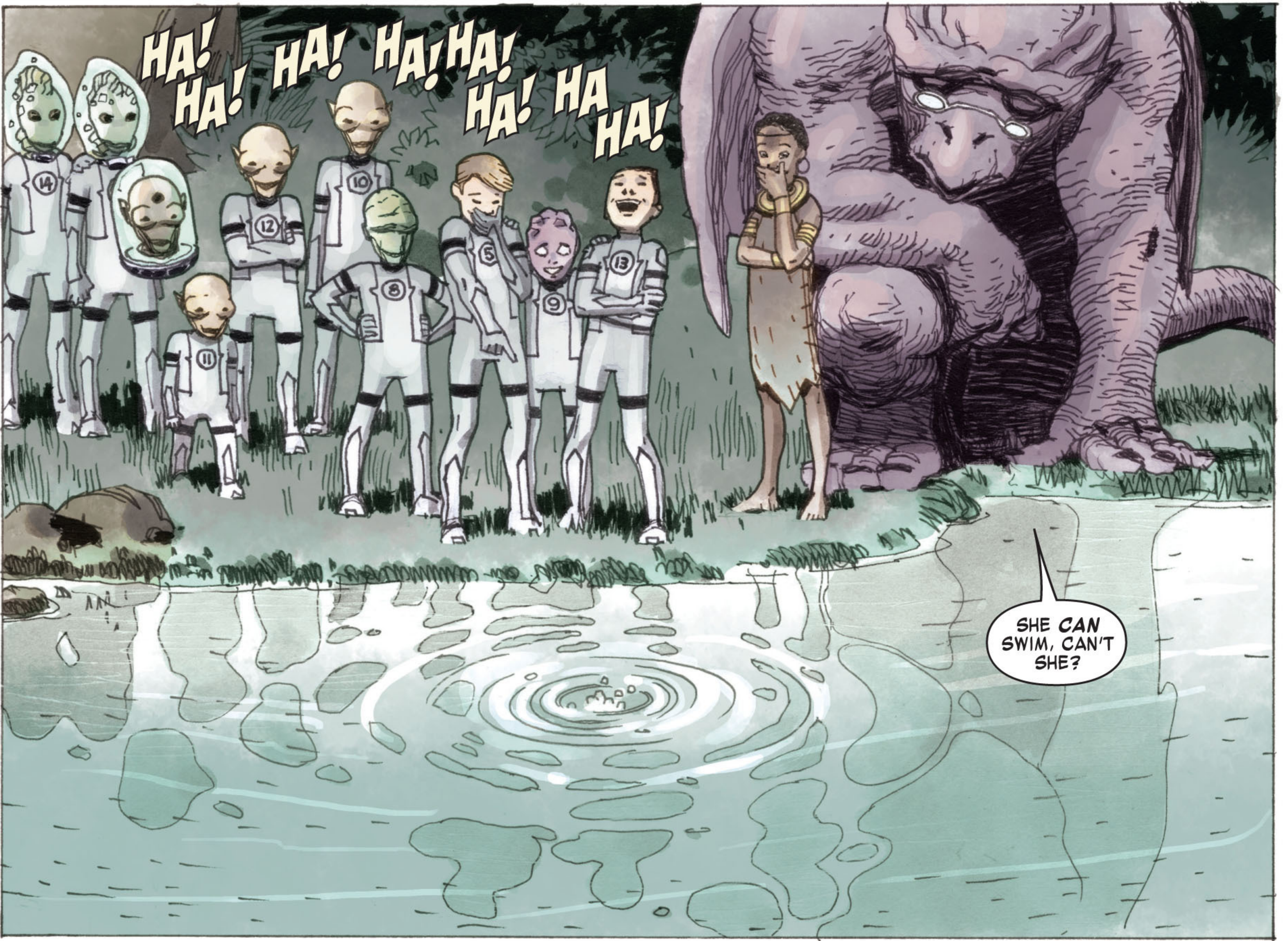


SO
WHAT'S YOUR
FATHER WORKING
ON N--

HEADS
UP, VAL!

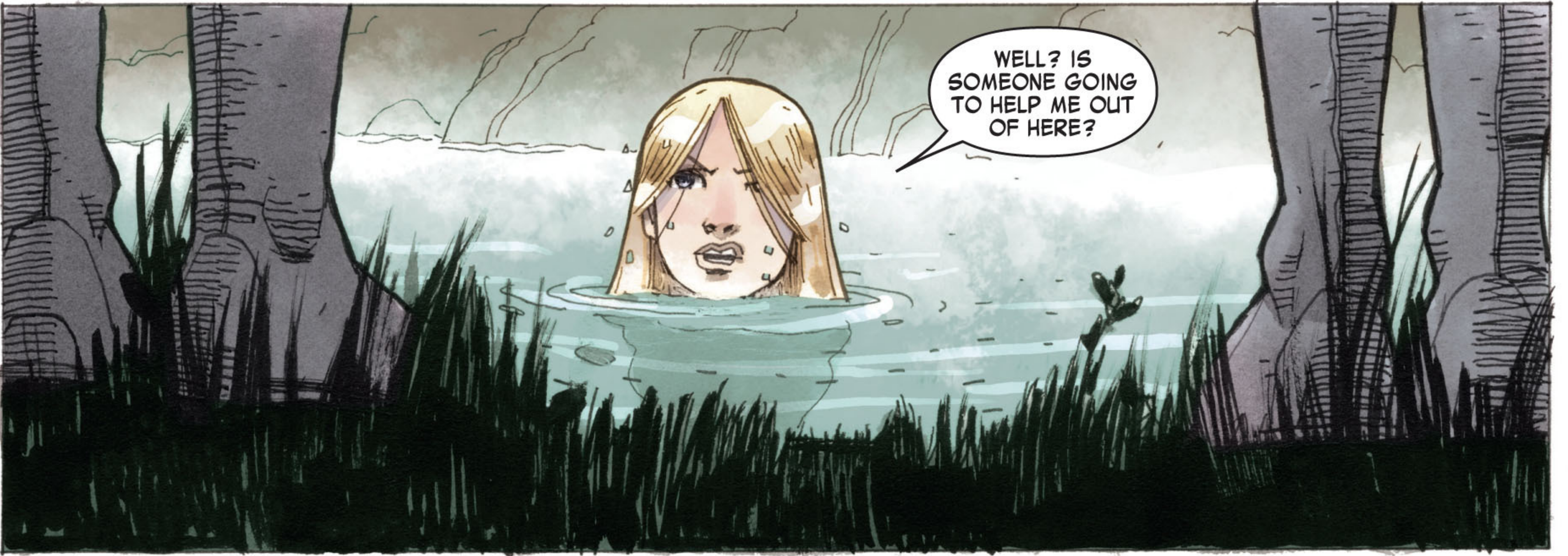


HOPE
YOU CAN
SWIM!

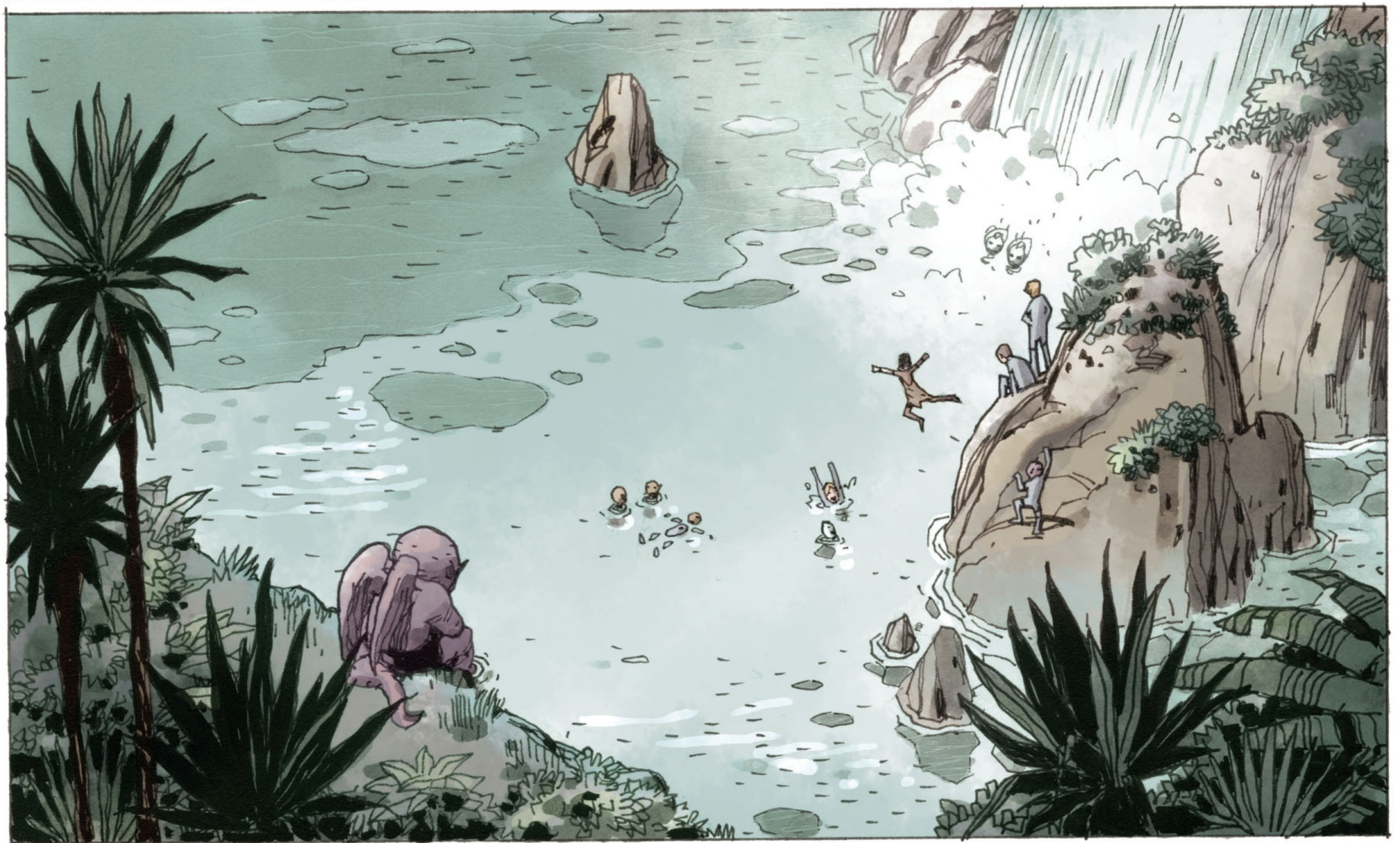
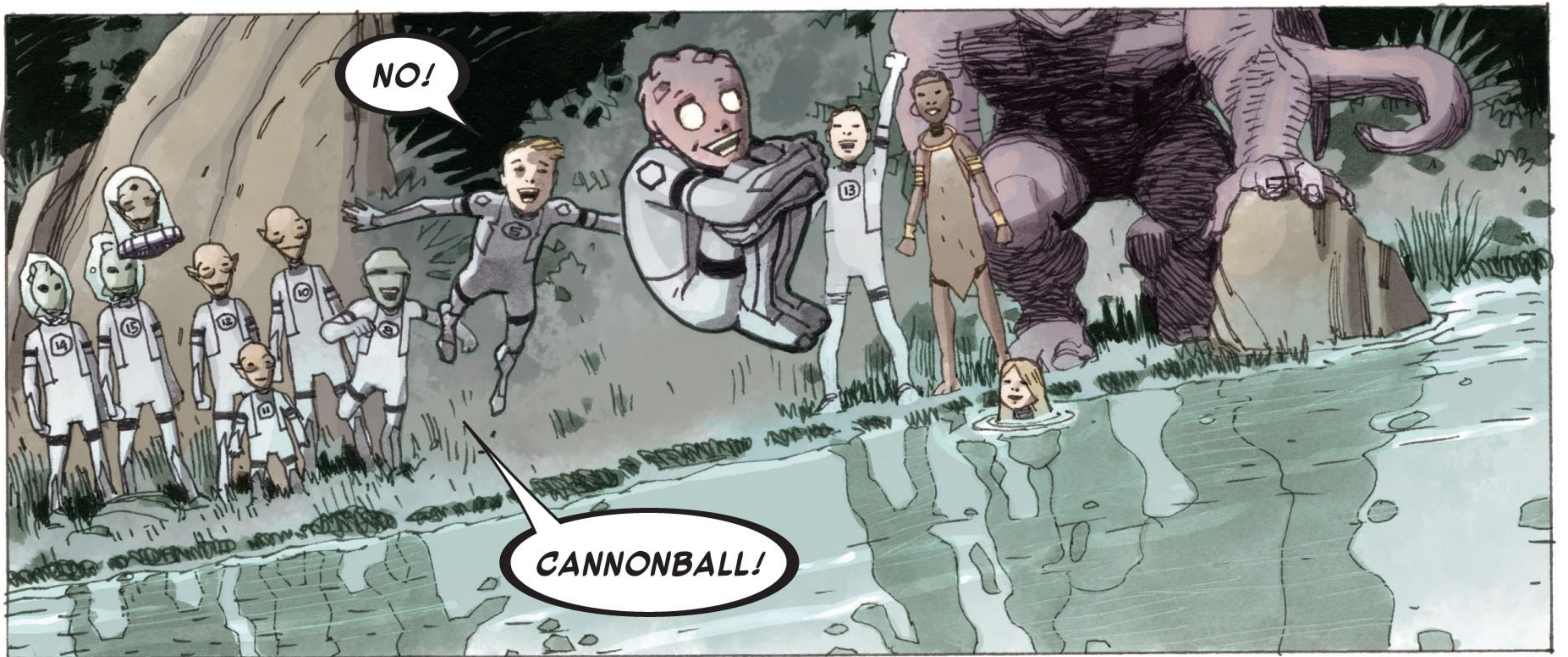


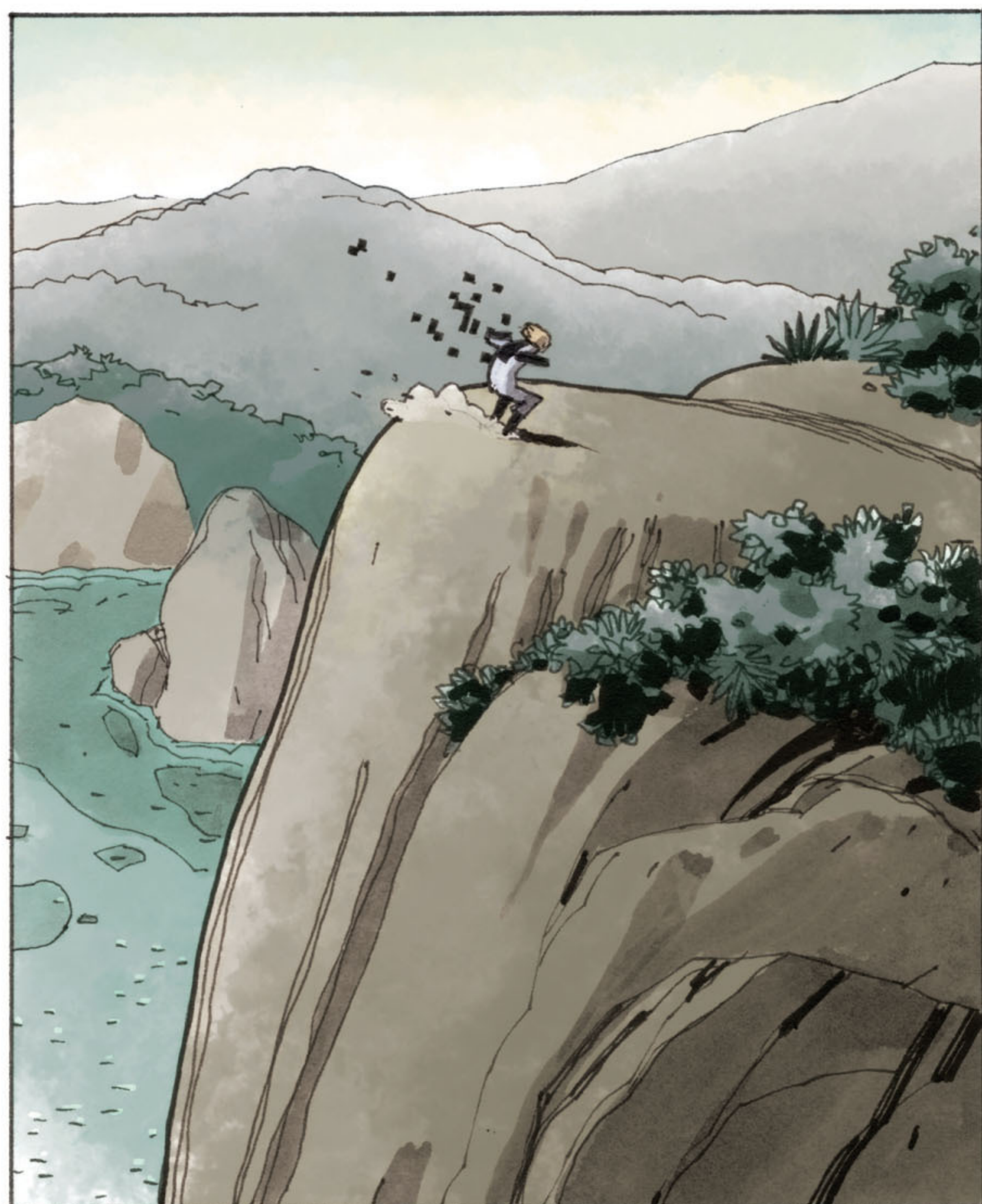
HA! HA! HA! HA!
HA! HA! HA! HA!

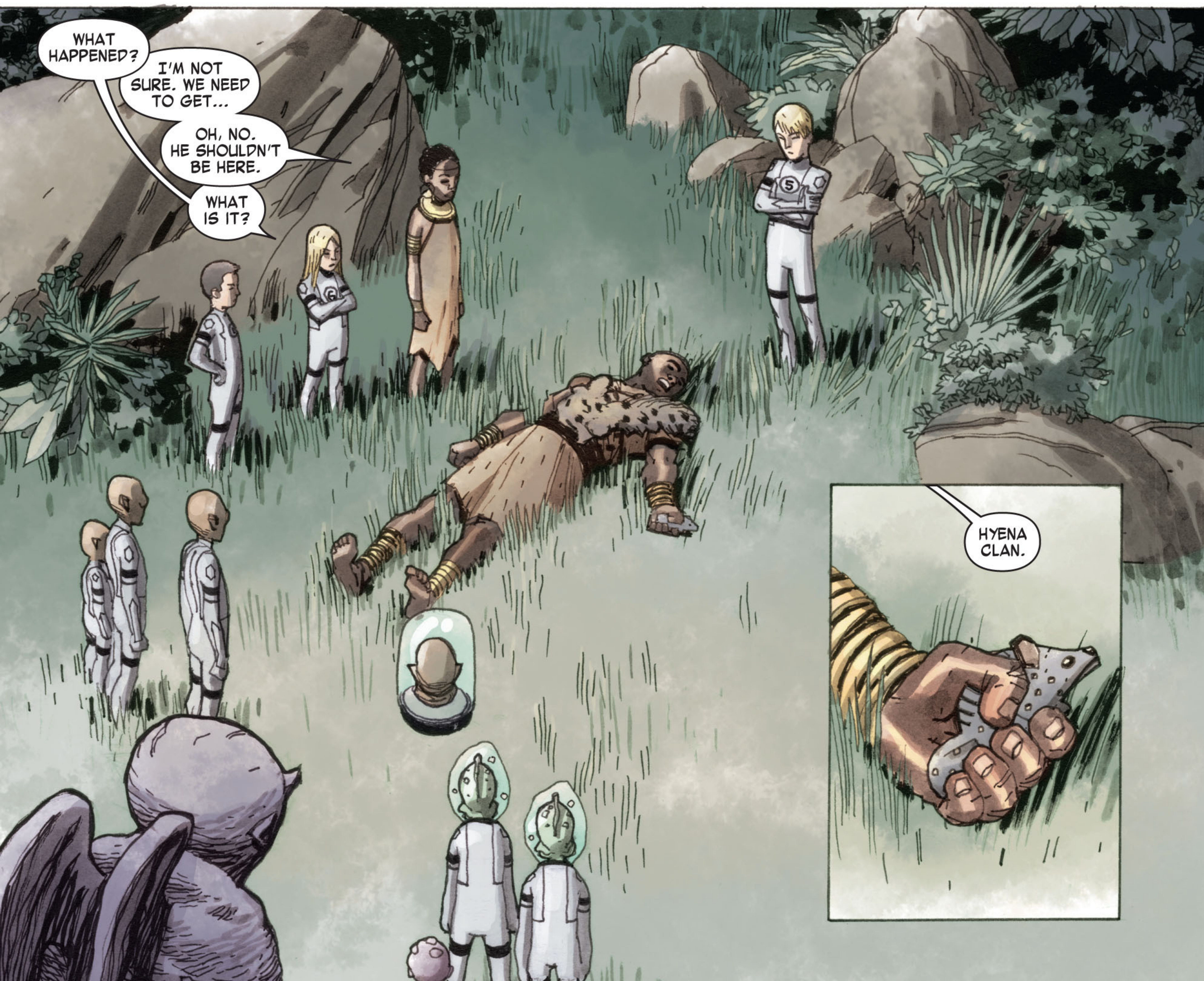
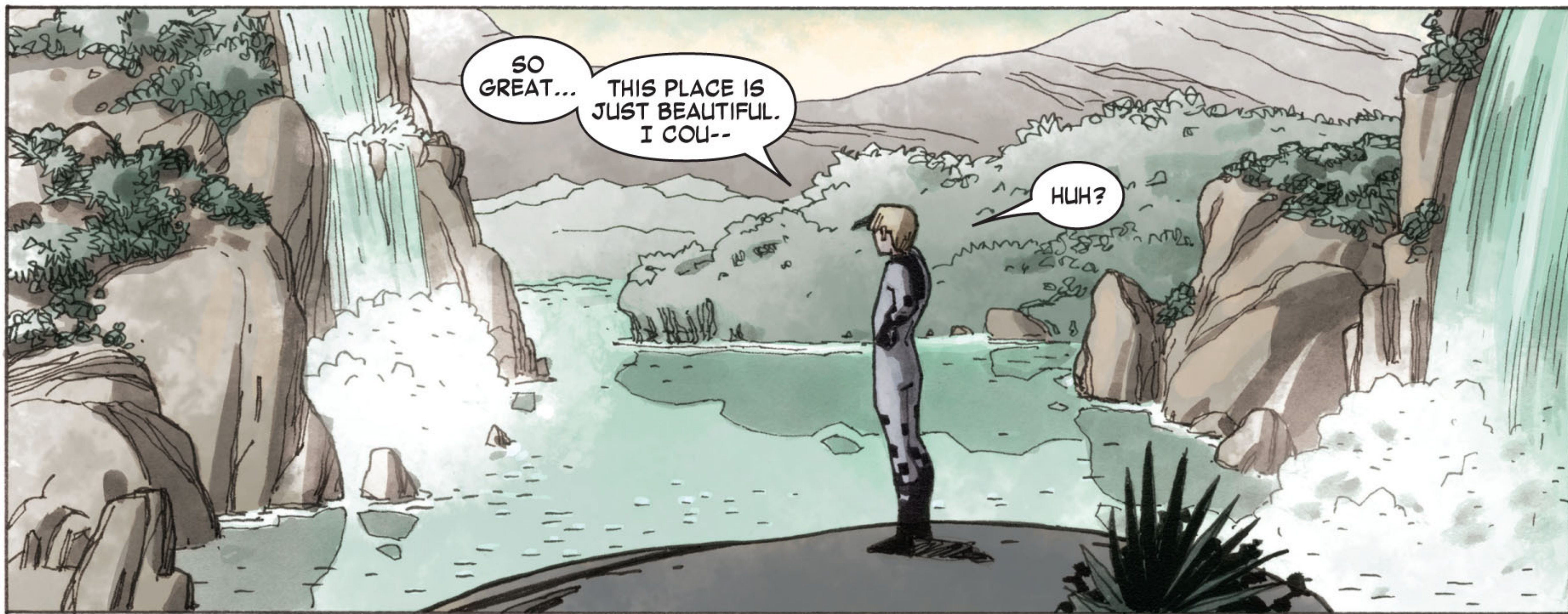
SHE CAN
SWIM, CAN'T
SHE?



WELL? IS
SOMEONE GOING
TO HELP ME OUT
OF HERE?









THE HYENA
CLAN.

HATED SCAVENGERS
AND THIEVES.

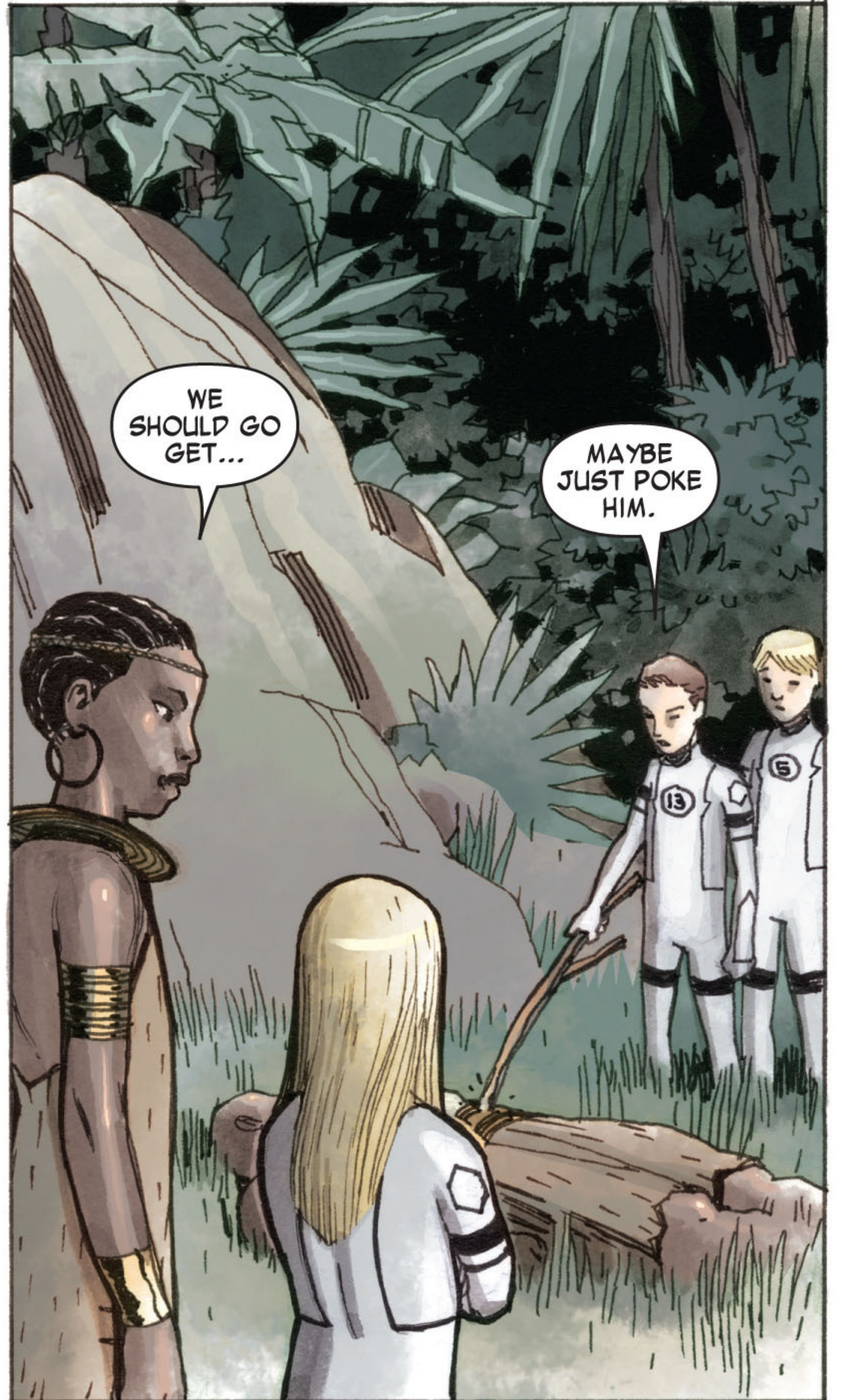


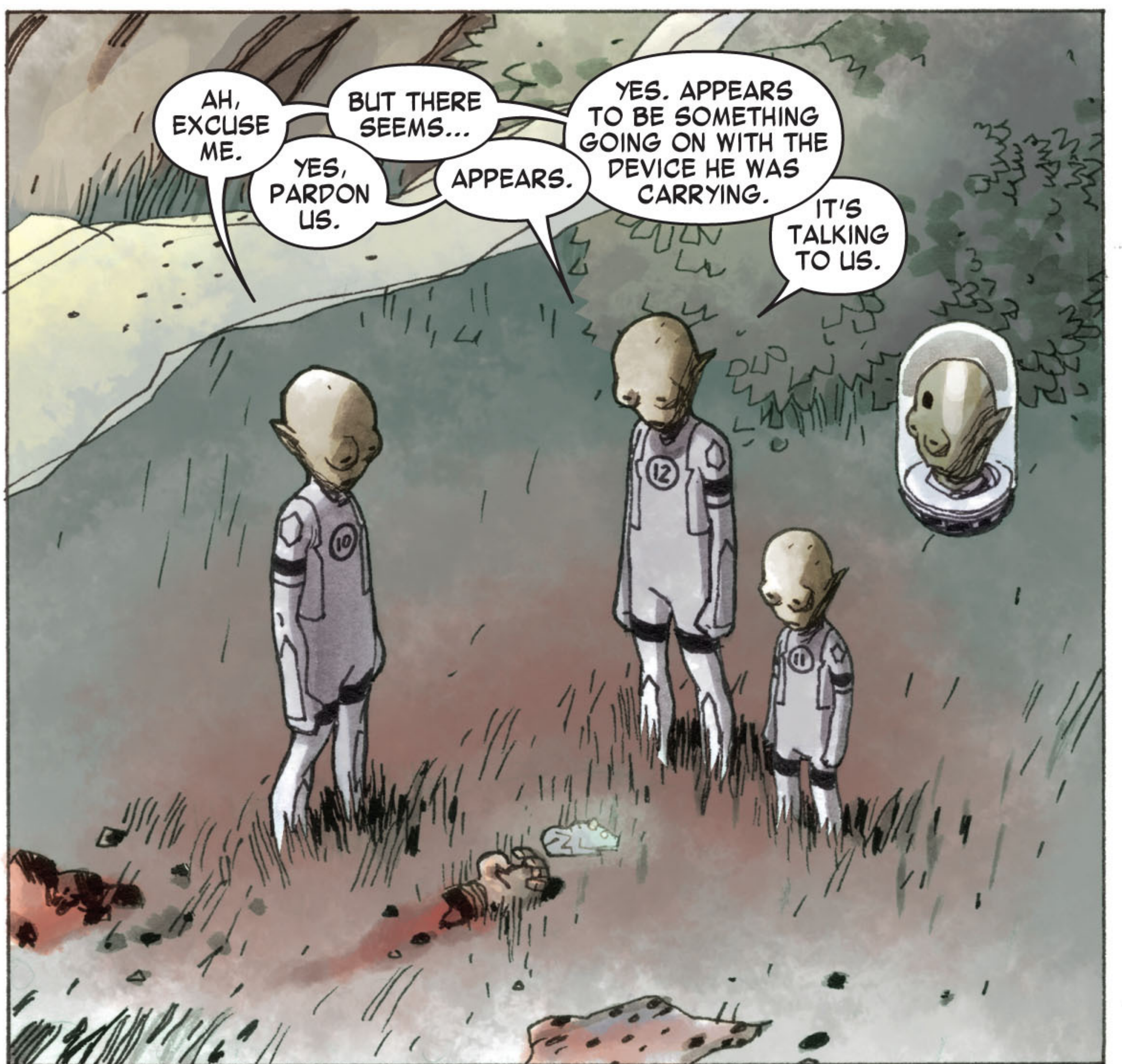
CALLING NO NATION
HOME, THE PACK ROAMS
THE CONTINENT...

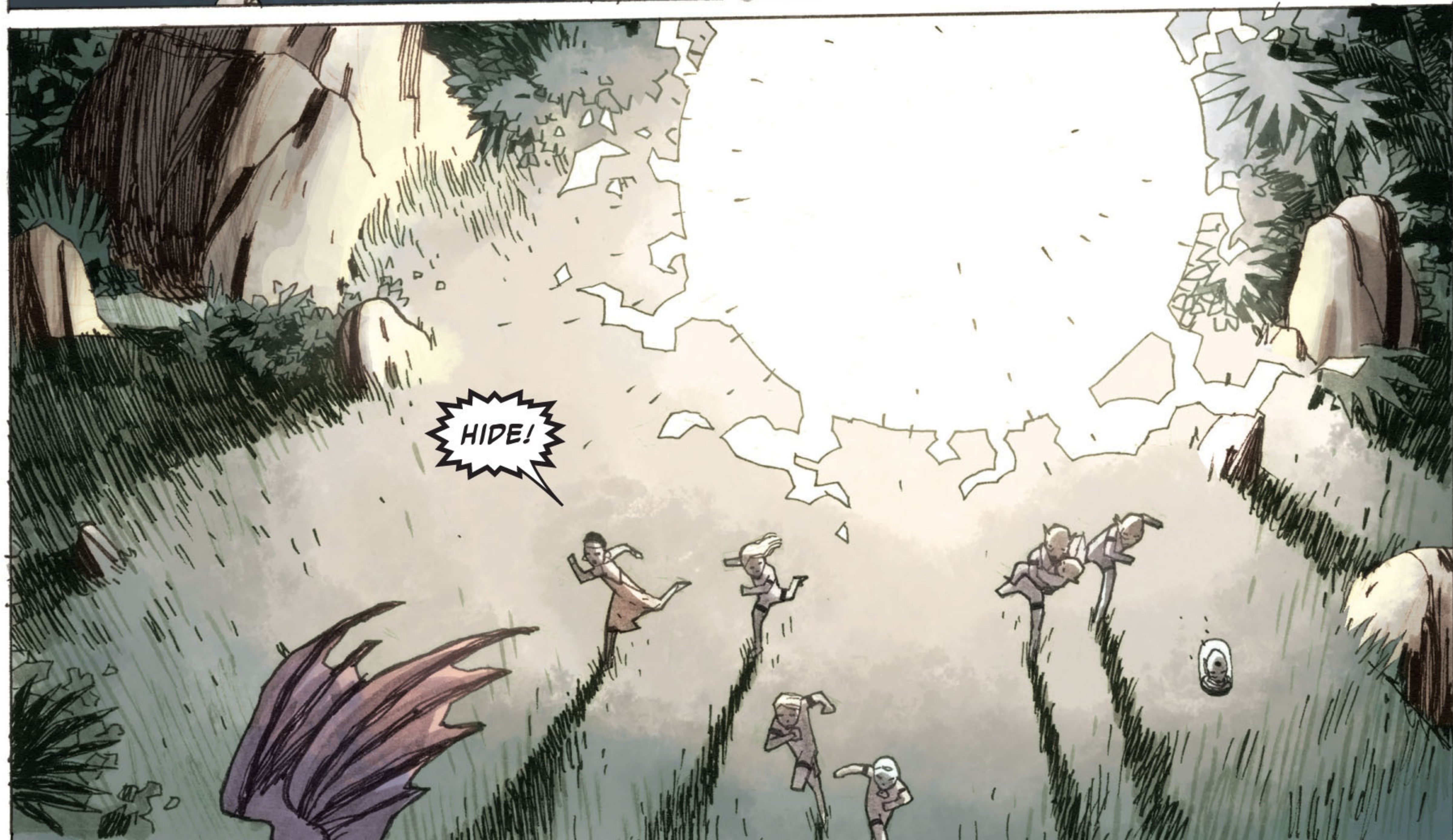
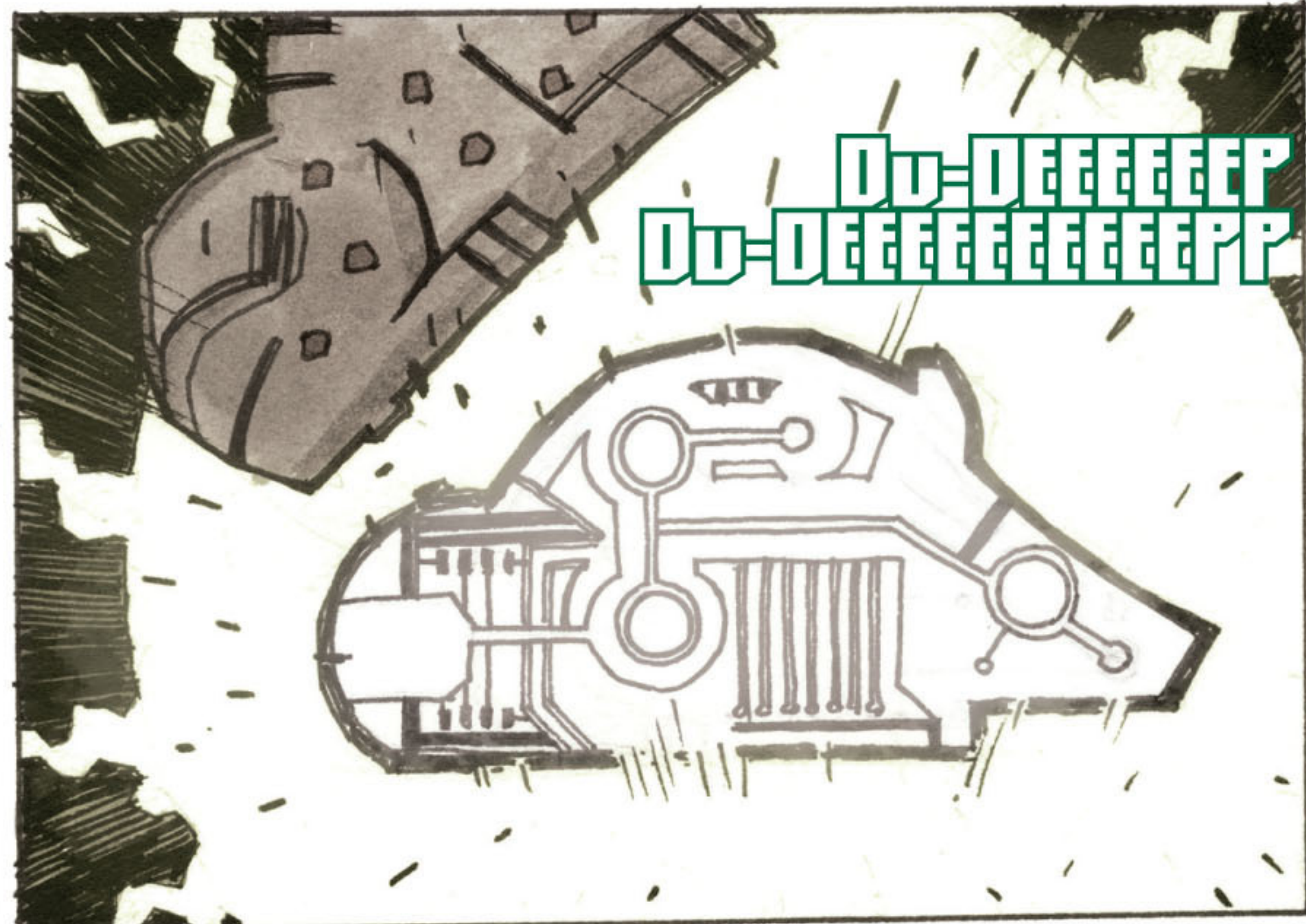
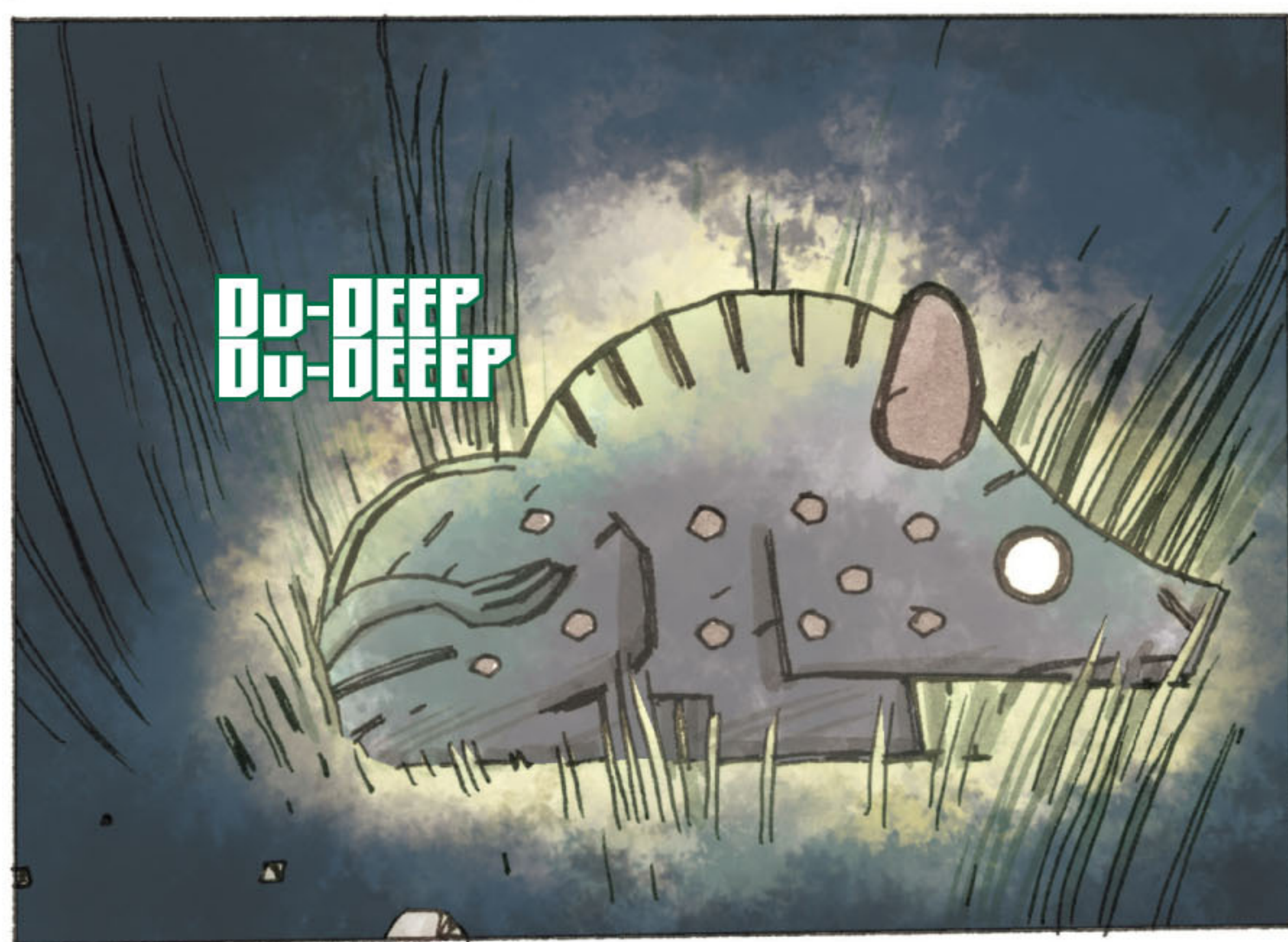
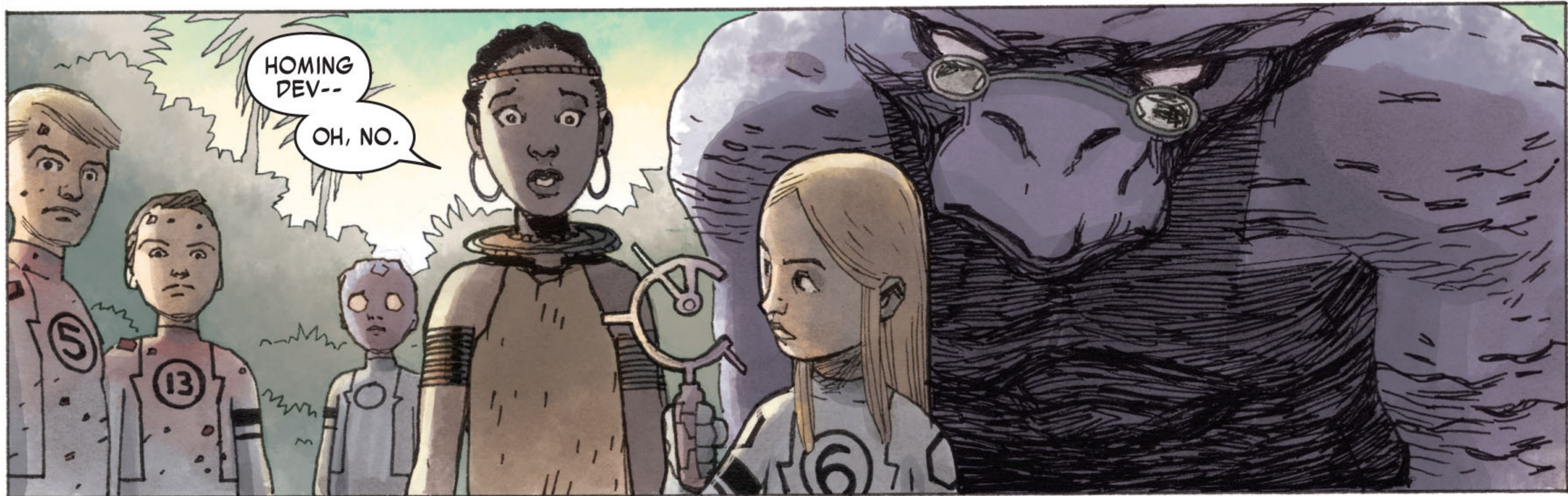
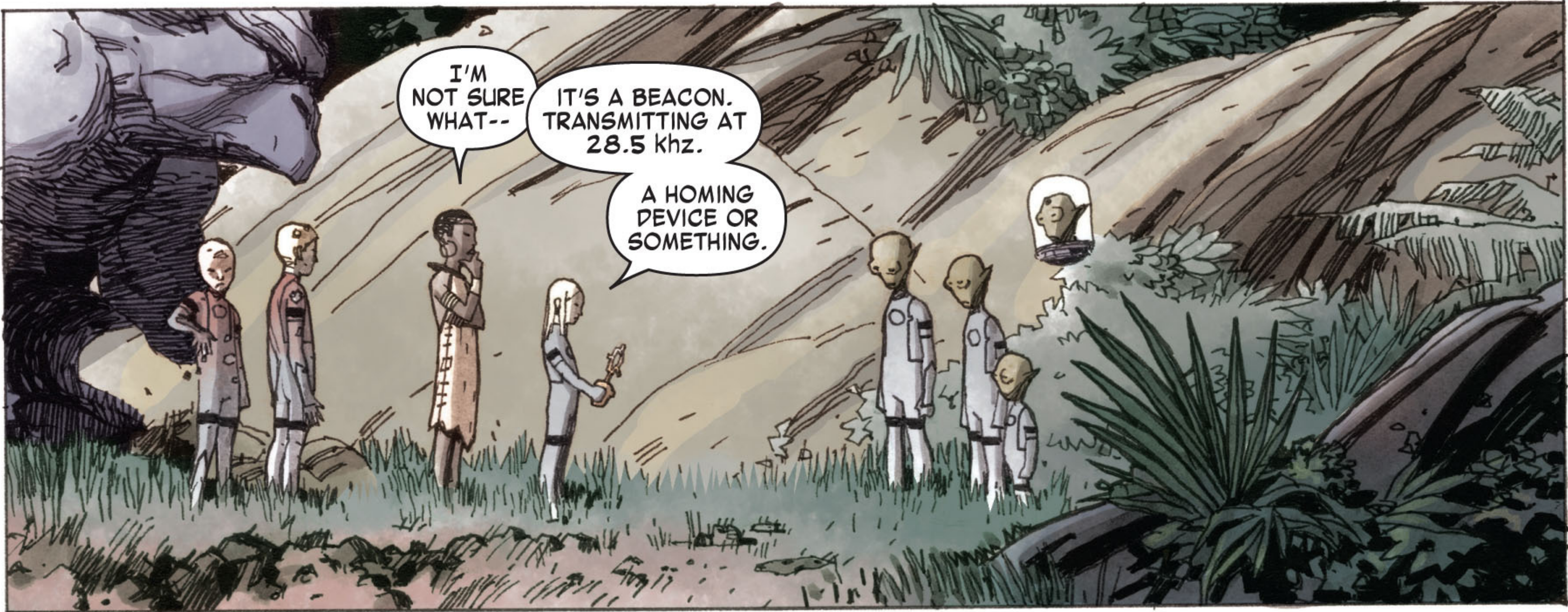
TAKING WHATEVER
THEY WANT.



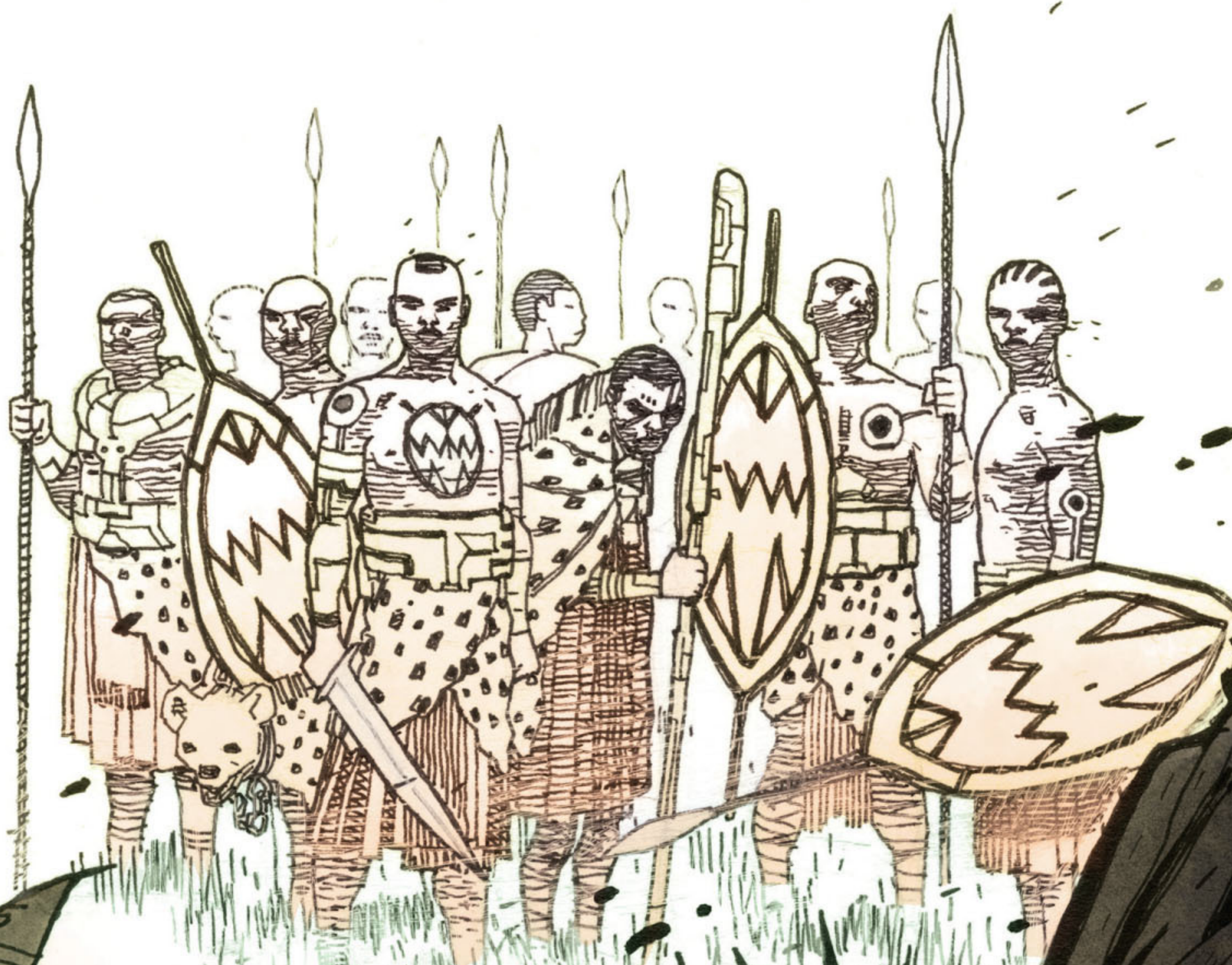
KILLING WHATEVER
STANDS IN THEIR
WAY.







FWASHH



WE HAVE
SUCCESSFULLY
ARRIVED AT THE
RESERVOIR,
AARDWOLF.

EXCELLENT.
BE A GOOD BOY
AND GET US A
DRINK.

I'D LIKE
A LITTLE
TASTE BEFORE
WE STEAL IT
ALL.



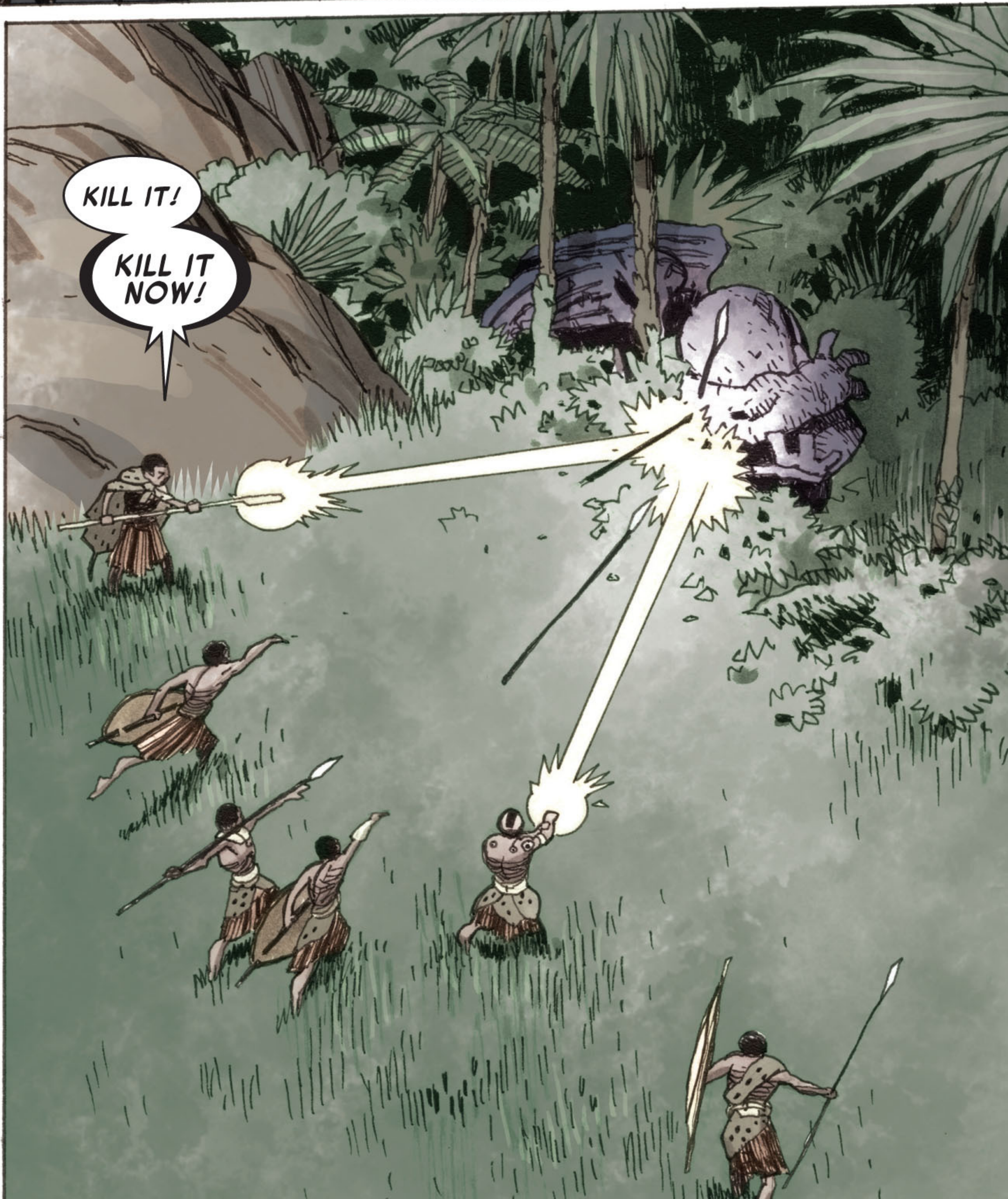




HOW DO
YOU NOT SEE
THE GIANT FREAKING
DRAGON HIDING BEHIND
THE FREAKING
TREE?!

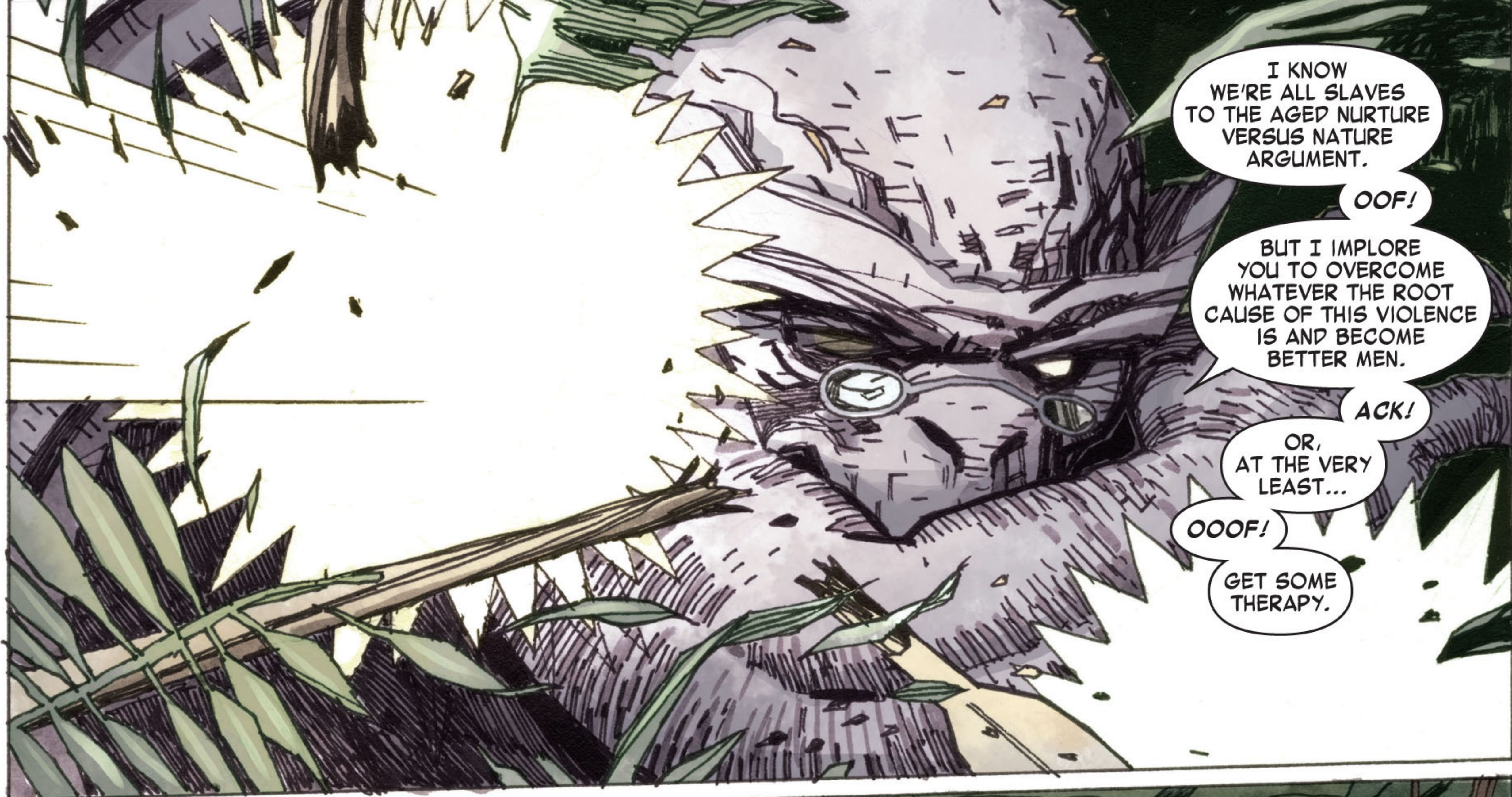


WELL.
I REALLY DON'T
KNOW THAT ALL THE
SCREAMING IS
NECESSARY.



KILL IT!

KILL IT
NOW!



I KNOW
WE'RE ALL SLAVES
TO THE AGED NURTURE
VERSUS NATURE
ARGUMENT.

OOF!

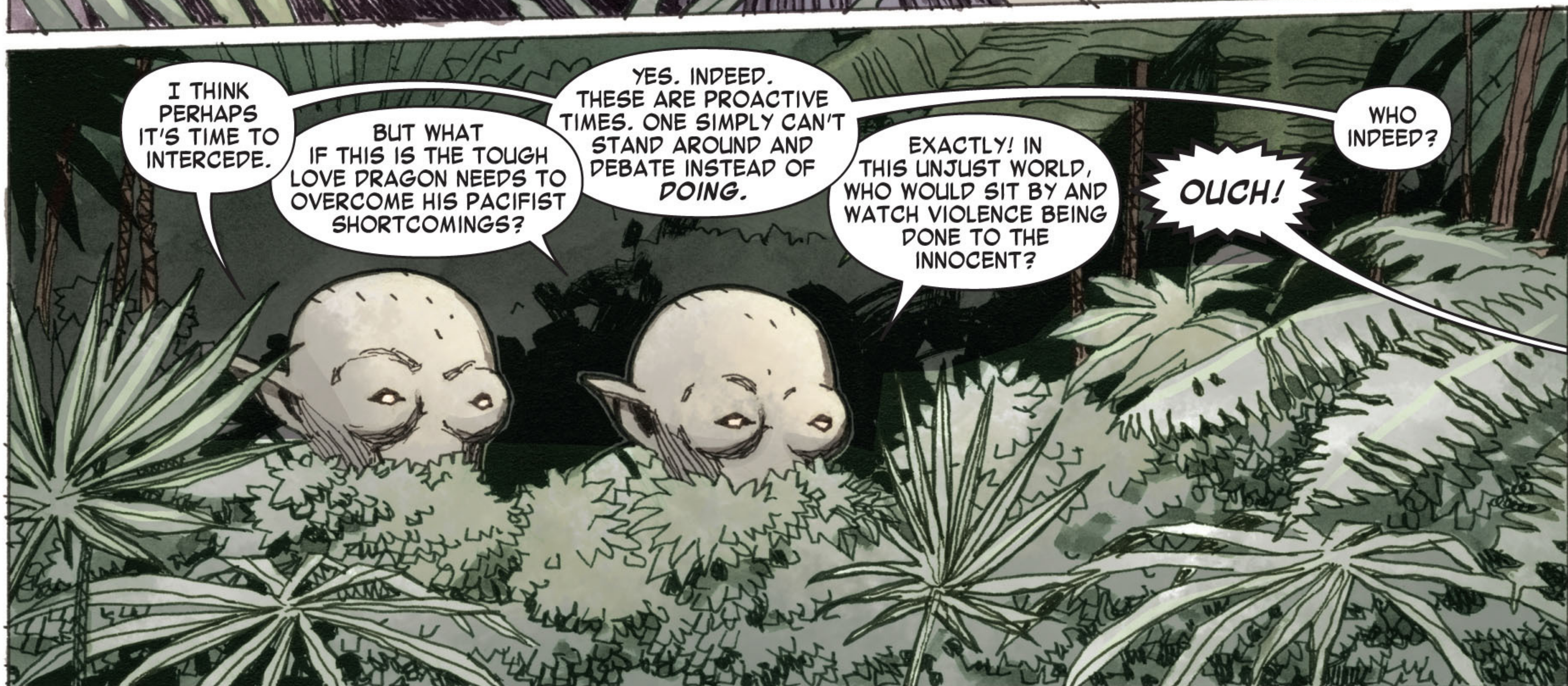
BUT I IMPLORÉ
YOU TO OVERCOME
WHATEVER THE ROOT
CAUSE OF THIS VIOLENCE
IS AND BECOME
BETTER MEN.

ACK!

OR,
AT THE VERY
LEAST...

OOOF!

GET SOME
THERAPY.



I THINK
PERHAPS
IT'S TIME TO
INTERCEDE.

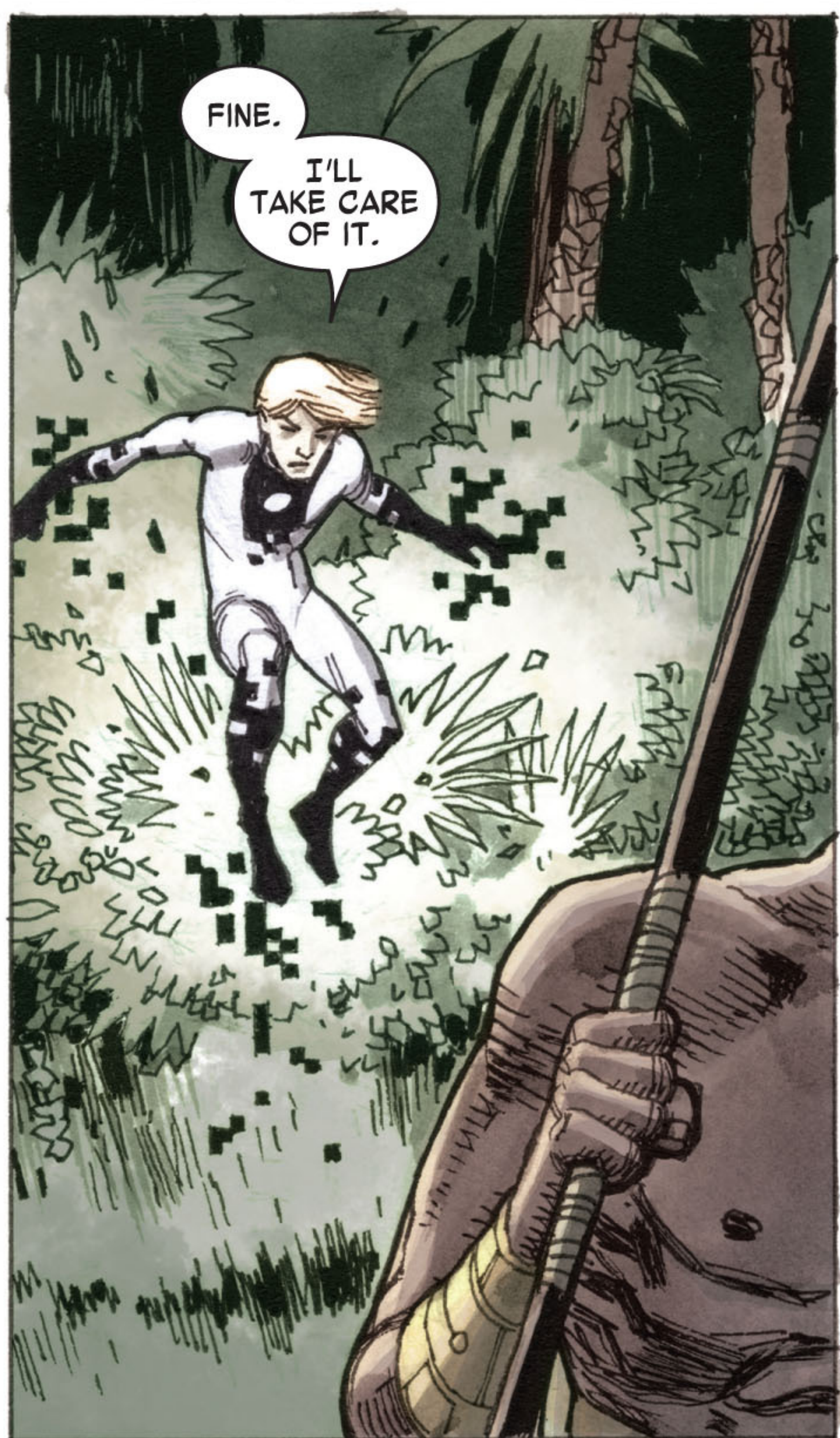
BUT WHAT
IF THIS IS THE TOUGH
LOVE DRAGON NEEDS TO
OVERCOME HIS PACIFIST
SHORTCOMINGS?

YES. INDEED.
THESE ARE PROACTIVE
TIMES. ONE SIMPLY CAN'T
STAND AROUND AND
DEBATE INSTEAD OF
DOING.

EXACTLY! IN
THIS UNJUST WORLD,
WHO WOULD SIT BY AND
WATCH VIOLENCE BEING
DONE TO THE
INNOCENT?

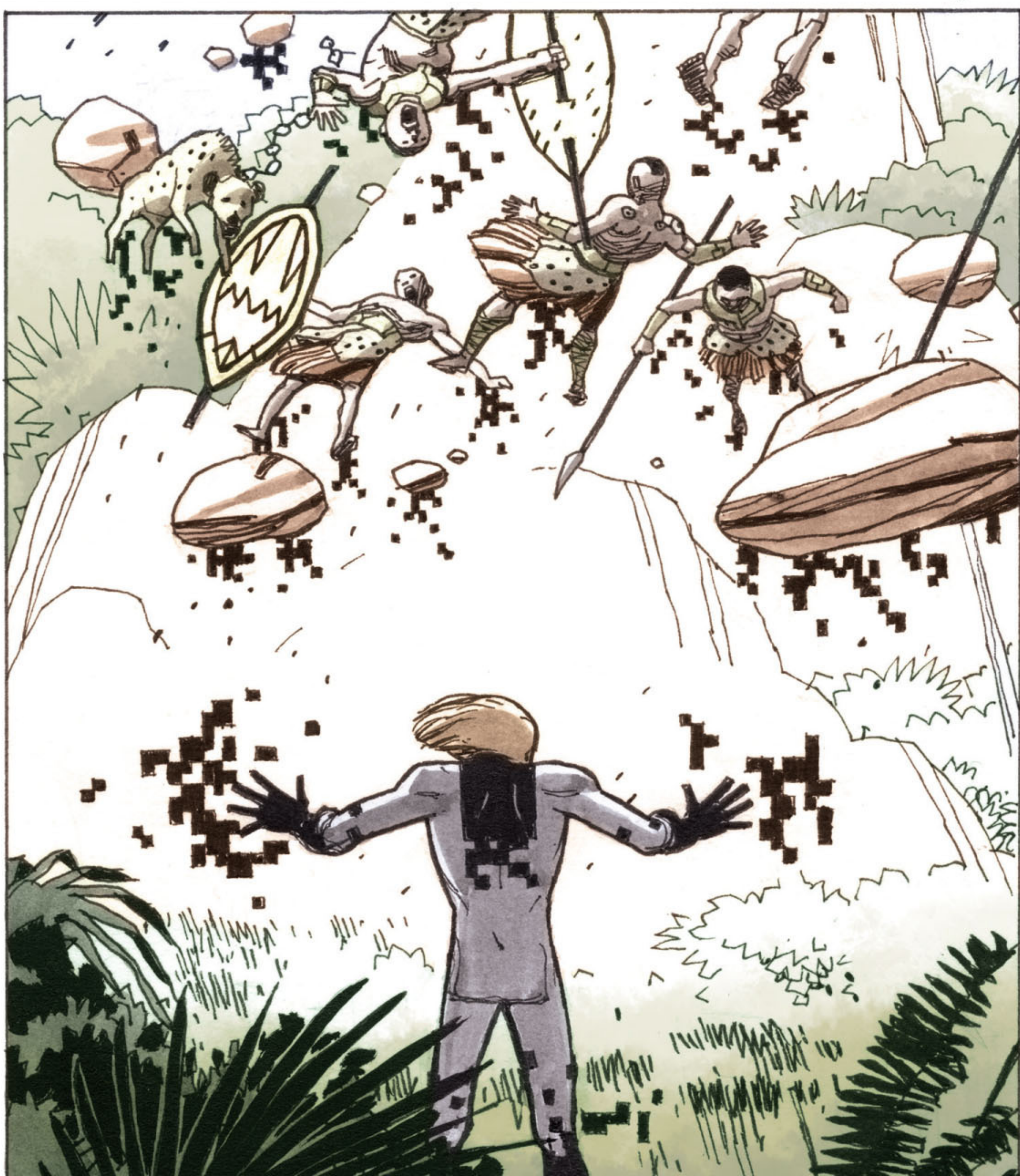
WHO
INDEED?

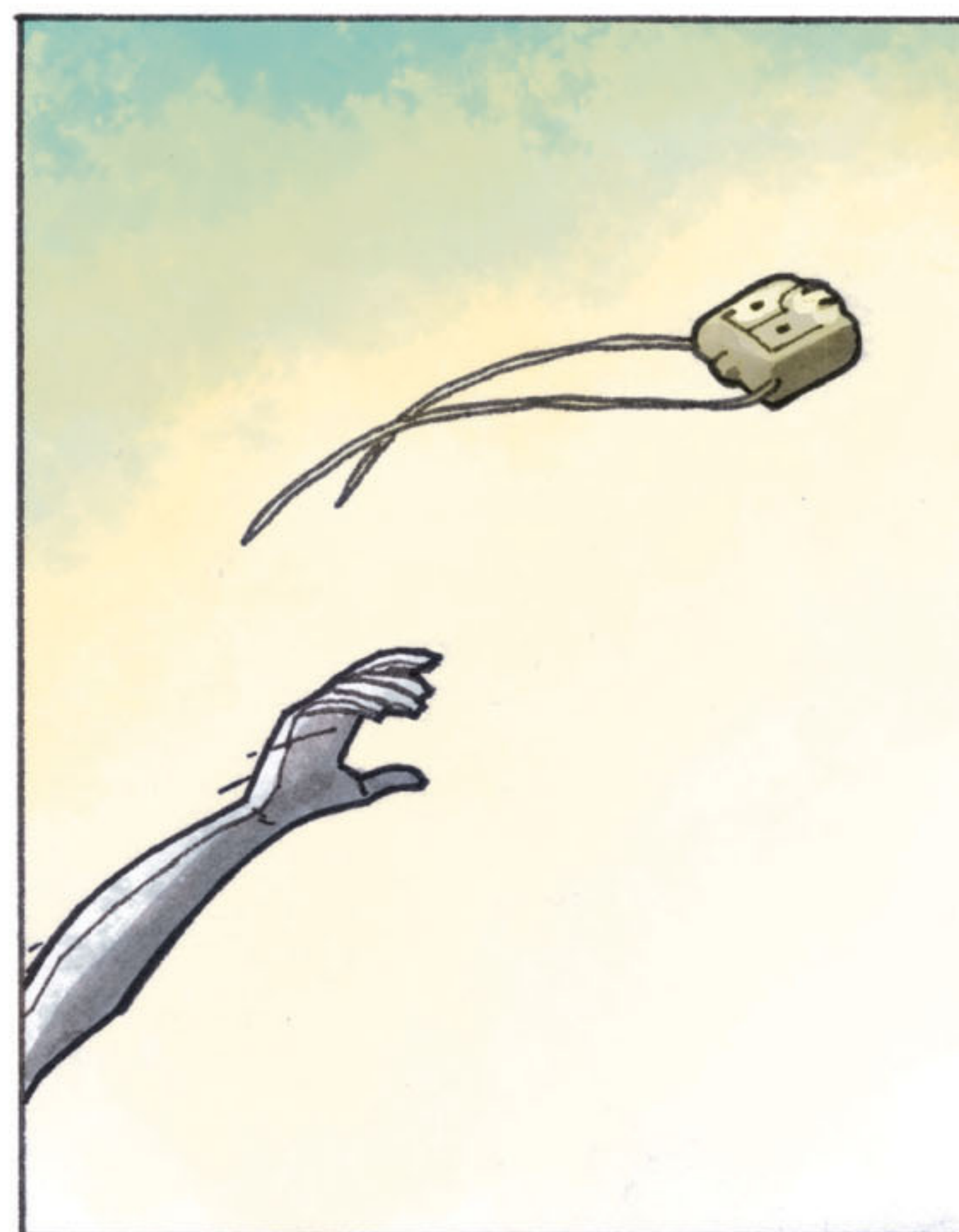
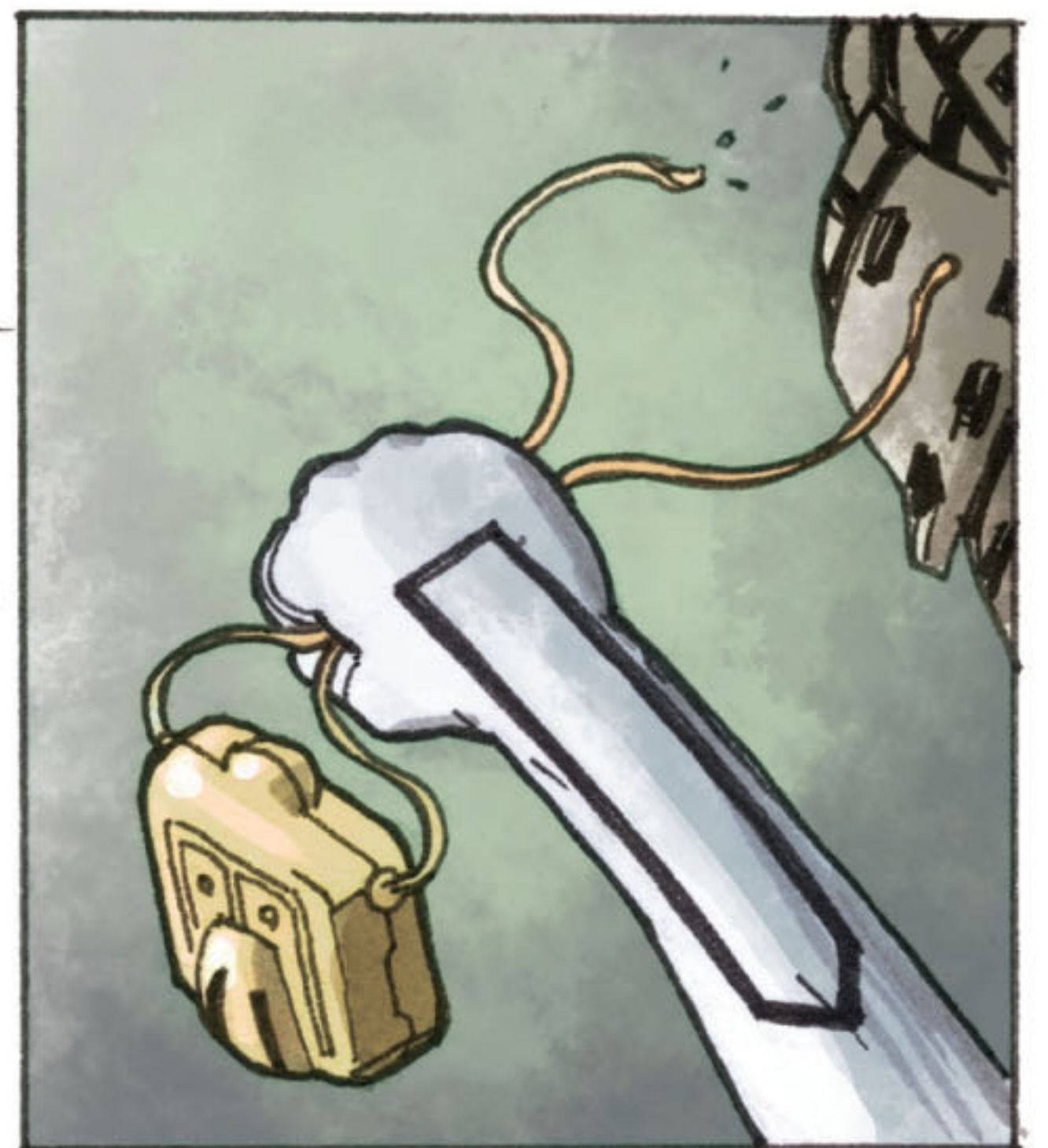
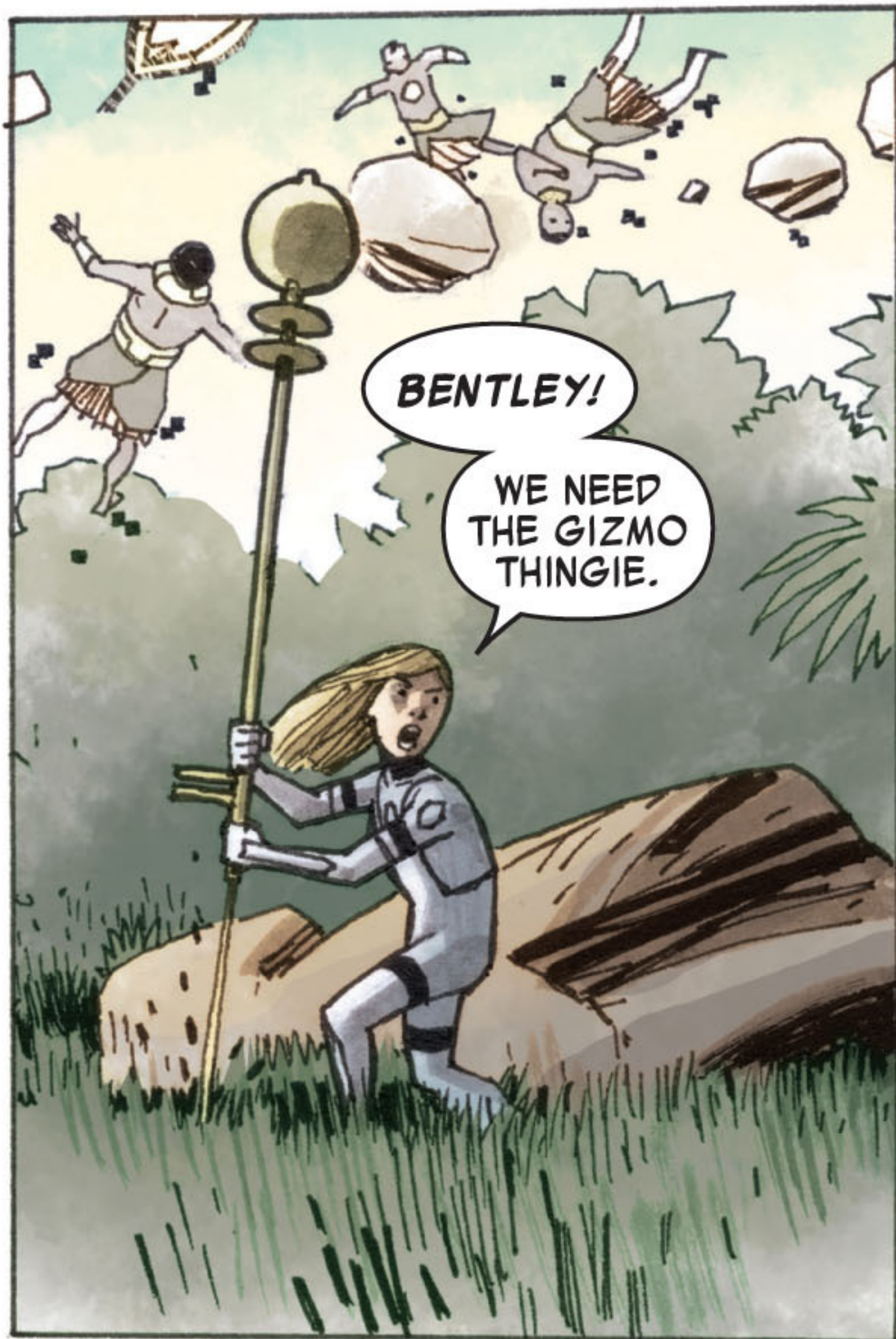
OUCH!

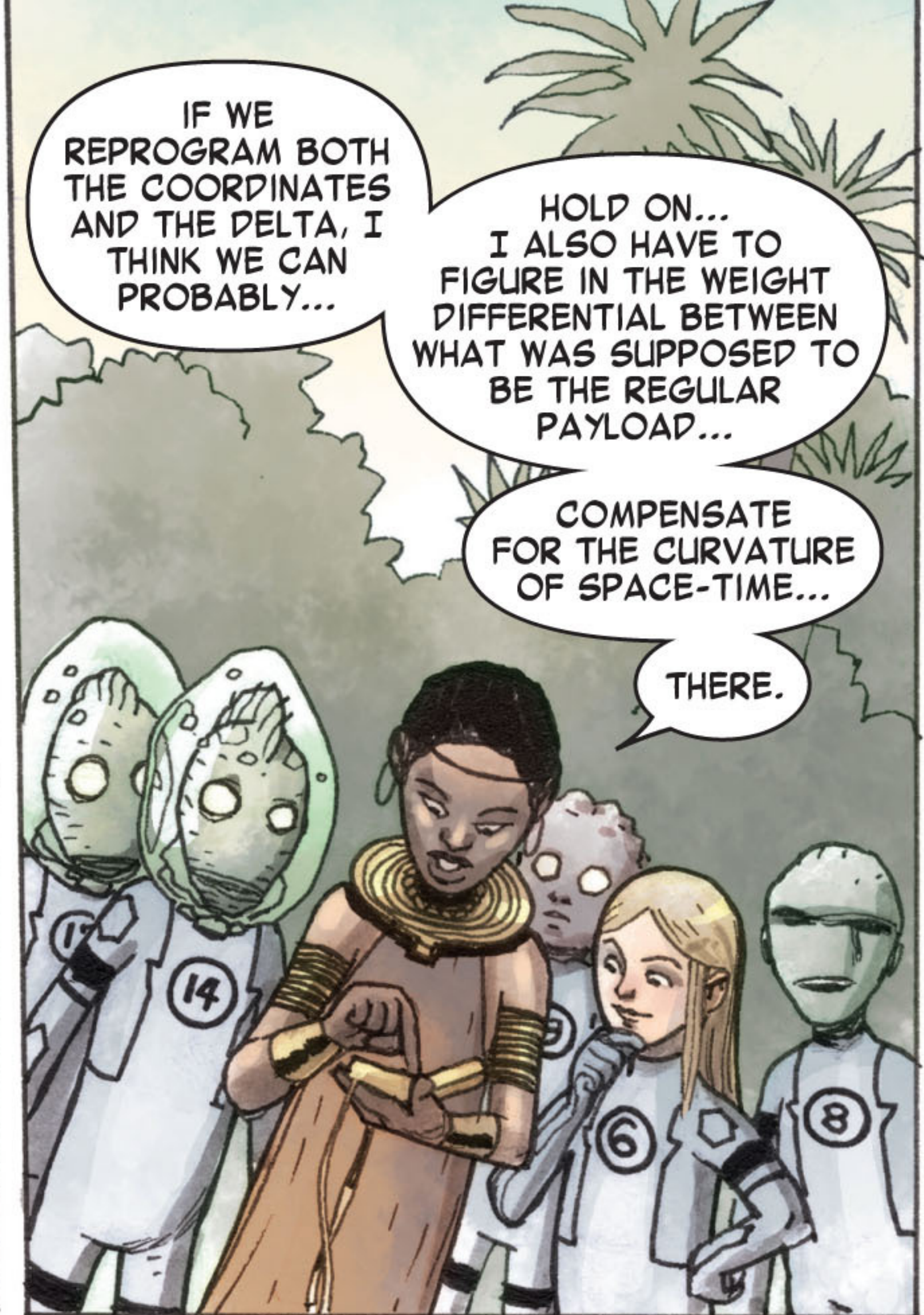
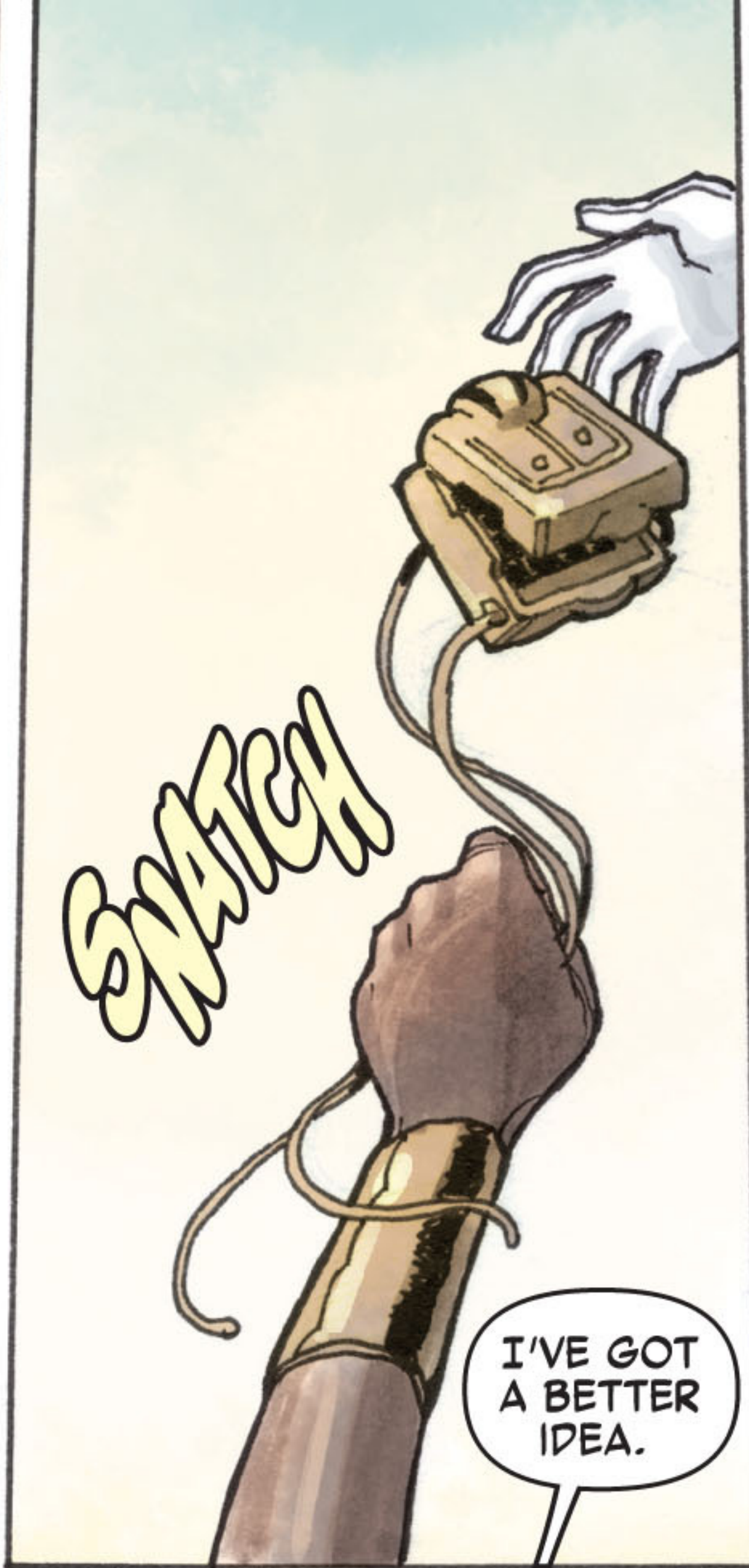


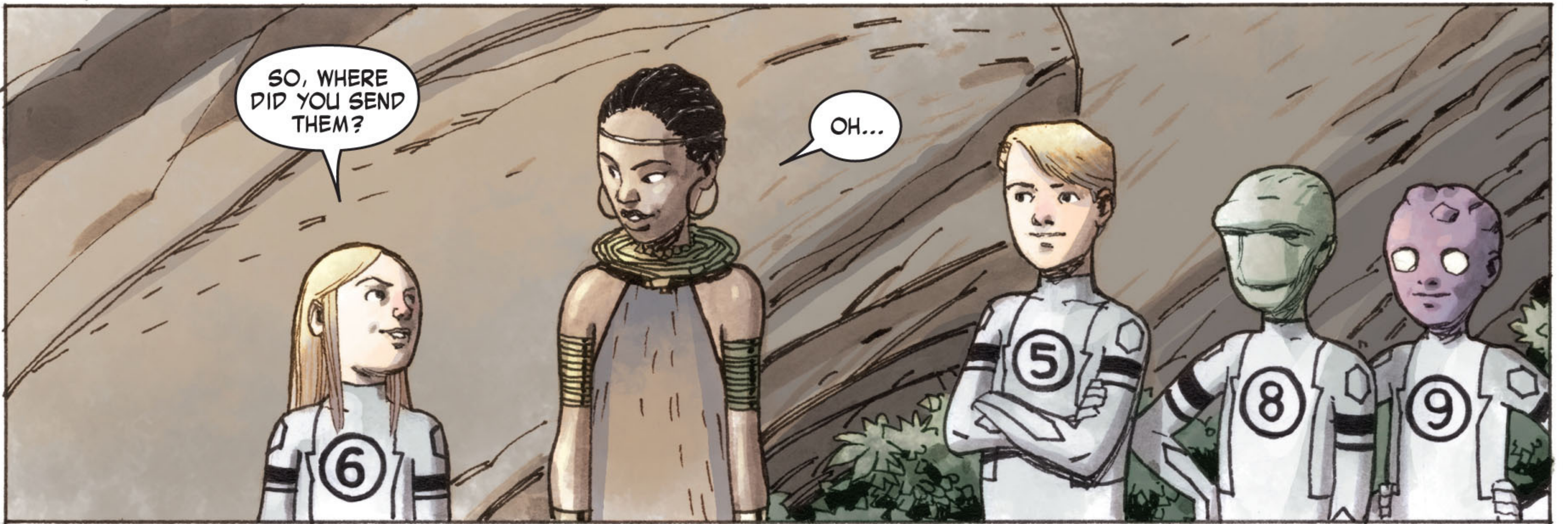
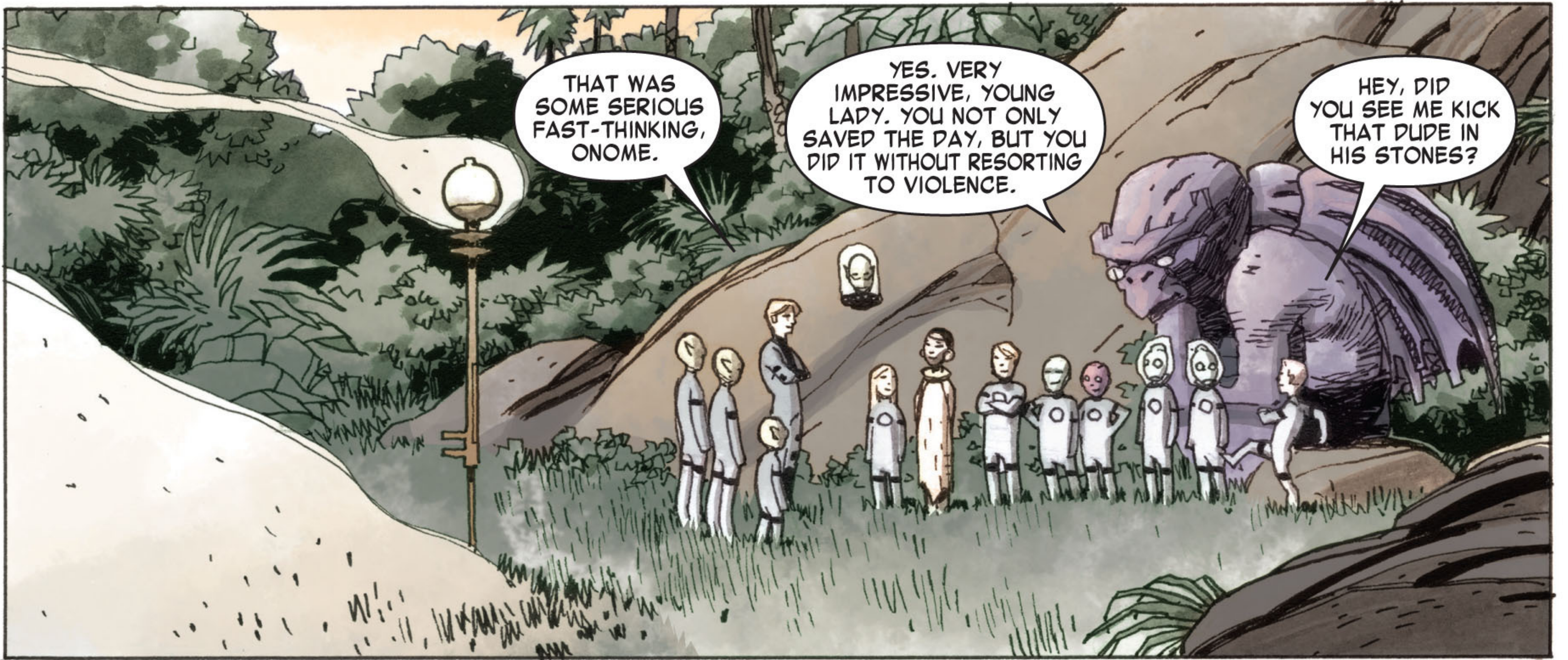
FINE.

I'LL
TAKE CARE
OF IT.

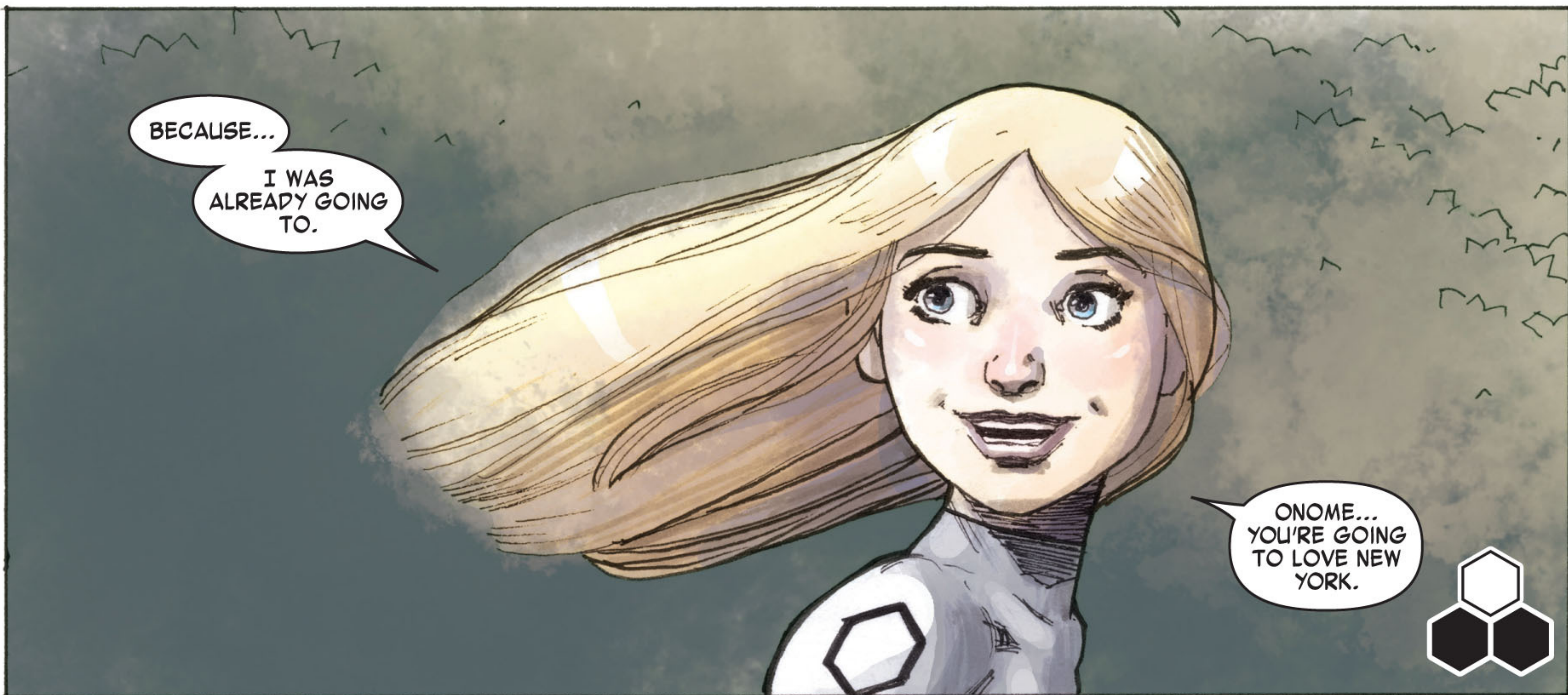
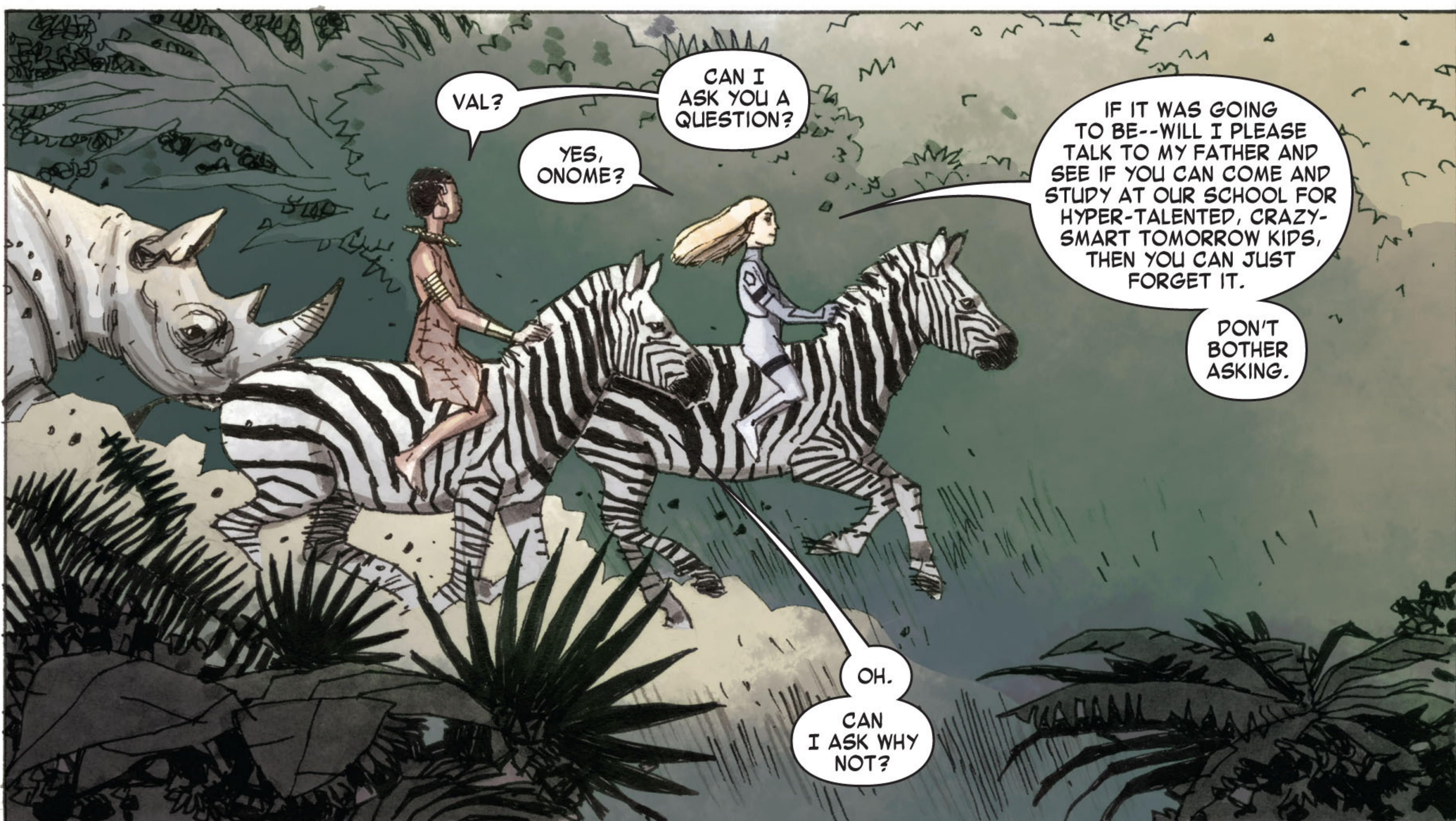








 **LATER.**



FANTASTIC FAN PAGE 4

As I write these words, it's been a little bit over a week since MARVEL'S THE AVENGERS opened in theaters coast-to-coast and shattered all box office records in no time flat! What does this have to do with FANTASTIC FOUR, you ask? Just the idea that the revolution in super hero storytelling that began with the publication of FANTASTIC FOUR #1 in 1961 has reached a new plateau and a new level of popular consciousness – and that, like the top copy says, the world will never again be the same! (And can a similar big-ticket FANTASTIC FOUR film be that far off? Only time will tell!)

And now, to the mailbags...

Dear Marvel,

I have been a fan of FANTASTIC FOUR since I was 14 years old, I'm 38 now and still a big fan. I had to quit collecting for a while due to getting married and having 5 kids, but I'm back now.

I love the way you brought Johnny back from the dead. And having Annihilus on a leash is great. Jonathan (my oldest son's name, by the way) Hickman's storytelling is one of my favorites and Barry Kitson artwork is fantastic. Will he be here for a while? Hope so.

Please tell me that Galactus isn't dead, Reed or the Silver Surfer can save him, right?

Thank you for making coming back so easy. My Fantastic family is still the same.

Thanks,
Brent Wraley

Welcome back, Brent! And no worries—as you no doubt witnessed in FANTASTIC FOUR #604, Galactus is alive and well! It'd take more than that to put the big guy down permanently!

Howdy, Mr. Brevoort:

You know me as a long time Nova fan. But I have been reading Marvel comics (most titles) for almost the last 40 years.

Just to let you know, FANTASTIC FOUR #603 rocked! I have not had my cosmic fix for a long time. Hickman and Kitson kicked into high gear here. When I picked up my comics today, I knew this was going to be the first one I read. I cannot wait to read the next issue.

Thanks,
J. Pritchett

Very glad to hear that we've been giving you what you're looking for, J! We'll try to keep at it!

To: The Creative team of FF:

I just saw the advertisement for FF # 15, and am really excited about the Power Pack being brought back together. I know it might just be this one story, but I hope it leads to more stories featuring the best super hero team in all of comic book history.

I already read and like both FF and FANTASTIC FOUR. I hope to be able to add any new Power Pack adventures to this list. I have been a fan of theirs since I found out about them and was able to get the original books.

Thank you for doing this, especially in these books.

I am happy to see these two families that have been friends ever since they met Franklin way back in POWER PACK # 16 and # 17.

Sincerely,
John T. Williams
Dayton, TN

I'm sure that it'll come as no surprise, John, that Jonathan Hickman is a Power Pack fan from back in the day! So you never know when the rest of the Power clan may show up in these pages again!

Dear FF team,

FF #15 rewinds the clock a little bit to cover the other side of the story leading up to the appearance of aged Valeria and Franklin in last week's FANTASTIC FOUR #603. Jonathan Hickman shines the spotlight on little Franklin here, showing the critical role he plays in the events that are transpiring.

However, FF #15 is not an issue that really stands

on its own two feet. It relies on readers having read this month's issue of Fantastic Four first to get the most out of it. If you fall into that camp, then you'll enjoy FF #15. If not, then this issue might have you scratching your head from time to time and wondering what the heck is going on as Hickman quickly jumps from moment to moment to fill in gaps in the story from the Future Foundation's perspective.

Hickman is also joined by a new artist in Nick Dragotta. Dragotta's style is a great fit for this book, bringing over the cartoon-y look of previous artist Juan Bobillo, but with a lot more refinement. Lines are clean and the flow of panels keeps the pacing brisk. Chris Sotomayor's vibrant colors further help bring the pages of FF #15 to life.

Sincerely,
Colten Stokes

Glad you enjoyed it, Colten! But while it wouldn't perhaps be the easiest read in the world (and while we'd certainly prefer it if you were to read both titles), we do try mightily to make both FF and FANTASTIC FOUR understandable independent of one another! But continue to let us know how we're doing in that regard.

Mr. Hickman;

Like all fans I was shocked and disappointed to hear that you had announced your decision to leave the Fantastic Family of Books after three years of the most wonderful stories comics have seen in years. While one cannot be mad at one who has given us such great stories one cannot help but be worried about where our great heroes will go next without the artist who had brought them to such new heights of excitement.

Anyway, enough with the gushing, let's get to actual comic book discussion. Now recently I was re-reading the letters pages of my FANTASTIC FOURS, and a while back, a writer had requested a No-Prize for a suggestion that Kang had protected our current Nathaniel in the great hunt, as he had to make sure that this specific Nathaniel had been around to produce the ancestor from which he derived. You had stated that unfortunately there would be no No-Prize as you could think of at least three reasons why this action would be unnecessary for Kang, and promised a No-Prize to whomever could name those three reasons. Well, I never saw anyone claim this No-Prize, so I figure about a year later I might as well toss in my answer. The three reasons were of course Reed, Franklin, and Valeria all of whom could in the future result in the line that produced Kang in the future. I don't know if this is really deserving of a No-Prize, but who am I to argue, but this all brings me to a second point.

Nathaniel appears to be clearly younger in these stories than he has in earlier issues. Now could this be a depending on Artist switch, certainly it could, but I happen to be a big fan of the ongoing SHIELD series you are also writing and can't help but notice a very direct timeline depiction of Nathaniel in these stories and the current stories. That is, that this current Nathaniel is clearly from the period of time just after he left Reed's life His build, hair color and beard style all bespeak the Nathaniel we've seen from this past. More to the point his relationship with Reed no longer seems based on a prolonged estrangement but only a short separation (essentially expecting his now grown son to simply fall back under his authority, as if the past few decades between college and the present had never occurred, perhaps because for him they didn't). When we compare this to the appearance and behavior of the Nathaniel we've seen earlier, well one can only come to the conclusion that the earlier Nathaniel is actually from later in Nathaniel's life. That the warlord phase of Nathaniel's life that we saw in John Byrne's great series comes after the events we are seeing today, even though for Reed and company this was all in their past.

What's more I believe very much that Reed knows that this Nathaniel is from the past which makes his statement to Nathaniel that "just because you're from the future doesn't mean you know everything" line all the more important. And of course Reed can't tell Nathaniel that while he is from Reed's future, Reed is in fact from Nathaniel's future, as

that would disrupt time further, so they are all just going along accepting the information that Nathaniel can provide, but without informing him of his own future.

And of course, just to bring this all back to ancestors, you have the fact that this Nathaniel doesn't seem to know (or suspect) that Kristoff is his son as well (because that hasn't happened in Nathaniel's life yet either).

So, did I stumble upon one of the great mysteries you've hidden in plain sight throughout your amazing stories, or am I completely off base?

Also, just as an aside, if I may please request of the powers that be at Marvel that they allow FF to continue after you leave the book. While I know it's your baby, I've come to love the adventures of this team as much as I love the main team, and I would love to see their adventures continue and grow over time, I especially want to see more of Bentley as he matures into a great mad scientist in his own right, also I'm really hoping for the crossover between Avengers Academy and the Future Foundation, maybe a softball match?

And that is all the rambling I have for today, thank you for all the great writing you've given us and will continue to give us going forward in other books (can't wait for Manhattan Projects).

Sincerely,
Charlie Esser
Newark, NJ

Sounds like you nailed what Jonathan had in mind, Charlie, so your digital No-Prize is on its way to you! On the other hand, I don't think you're quite correct concerning Nathaniel's timeline—there's a clue in a previous issue that indicates something else entirely is going on there. Can you find it?



Dear Marvel,

I always get a little concerned when these big events happen because it always seems like the Fantastic Four get the shaft. Most of the FF tend to get eliminated early or are not given the credit they deserve and are treated like second rate heroes. I see that the Thing is set to battle Namor in the upcoming AVENGERS VS X-MEN series. Namor has been asking for a serious beat-down by Ben Grimm since, I don't know, 1962! If Ben does not firmly beat Namor I will be extremely disappointed in you folks at Marvel. I know this is AVENGERS VS X-MEN but the Thing is an Avenger now and if you let that pompous jerk Namor beat him I will almost be ready to give up on you guys. The Thing has much more determination than Namor and a much more noble heart. Don't disrespect the Thing and The Fantastic Four like you have so many times in the past during these big events. As far as I am concerned (and I have been reading Marvel since the early 80's) the Thing should be able to beat pretty much any strong guy Marvel has to offer except maybe the Hulk and Thor.

Don't let the Thing down! It's Clobberin' Time!

Victor Allen

As you hopefully have seen by now, Victor, the Thing gave a good accounting of himself against Namor both in AVENGERS VS X-MEN #2 and AVENGERS VS X-MEN VERSUS #1! And if not, both should still be available at finer comic stores everywhere, as well as digitally through the Marvel App!

Tom B
5/15/12

As always, if you've got an opinion to share, you can e-mail it to us at MHEROES@MARVEL.COM. Be sure to mark your letters as "Okay To Print!" if you'd like to see them featured here on the Fan Page!



**FANTASTIC
FOUR** #608
ON SALE

The cover features the Invisible Girl in her white Fantastic Four suit with a large '4' on the chest, reaching out with her right hand. In the background, the Thing is visible on the right, and the Black Panther is on the left. The setting is a lush green jungle.

**HICKMAN
CAMUNCOLI
KESEL
MOUNTS**

COMING SOON!



FF #20
ON SALE

The cover shows the Fantastic Four in a dramatic scene. The Thing is in the foreground, holding a large rock. Behind him, the Invisible Girl and the Human Torch are visible. In the bottom foreground, the two young sons of the Fantastic Four are shown looking up with expressions of concern. The background is a fiery red and orange.

**HICKMAN
DRAGOTTA
SOTOMAYOR**

TM



MARVEL

WITH THE AID OF THE ELITE INHUMAN **LIGHT BRIGADE**, **JOHNNY STORM** OVERTHREW THE RULE OF **ANNIHILUS** IN THE **NEGATIVE ZONE**--BUT HIS SUBJECTS VOTED TO RESTORE HIM TO THE THRONE. THE RESURRECTED **KREE SUPREME INTELLIGENCE** FORESAW HIS OWN DEMISE AT THE HANDS OF THE SILENT INHUMAN KING **BLACK BOLT**. **RONAN** THE KREE ACCUSER AND HIS WIFE, **CRYSTAL** OF THE INHUMANS, WERE CAUGHT UP IN THE CONFLICT BETWEEN THEIR TWO RESPECTIVE RACES. FUTURE INCARNATIONS OF **FRANKLIN** AND **VAL** HAVE JOURNEYED TO THE PRESENT TO COUNSEL THEIR YOUNGER PRESENT DAY SELVES.



“DEUS EX INHUMAN”



REED RICHARDS
MISTER FANTASTIC



SUSAN RICHARDS
INVISIBLE WOMAN



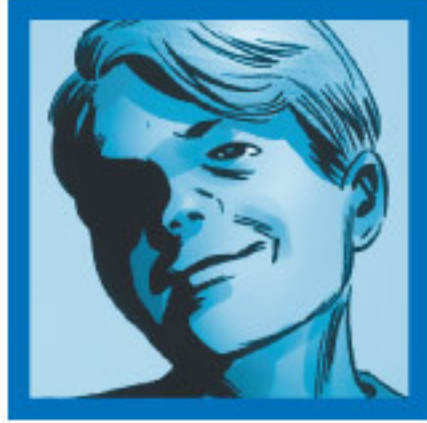
JOHNNY STORM
THE HUMAN TORCH



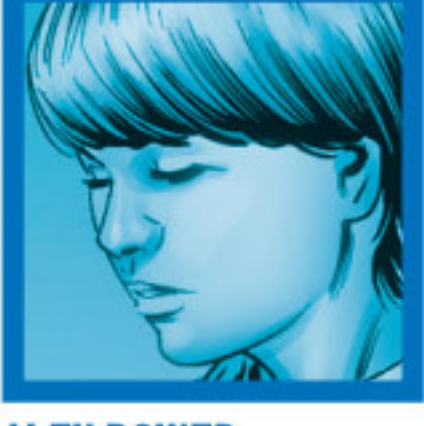
BENJAMIN GRIMM
THE THING



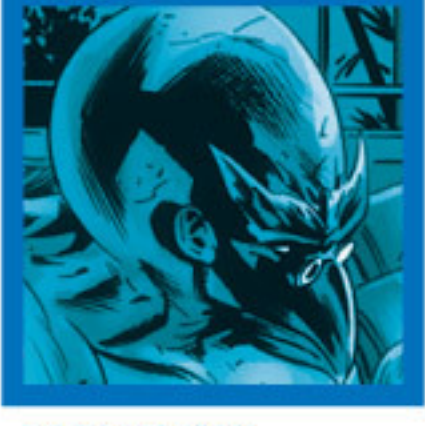
VALERIA RICHARDS



FRANKLIN RICHARDS



ALEX POWER



DRAGON MAN



WU & VIL



MIK, KORR & TURG



TONG



LEECH



ARTIE



BENTLEY



FUTURE FRANKLIN
RICHARDS

WRITER: **JONATHAN HICKMAN**

ARTIST: **NICK DRAGOTTA**

COLOR ARTIST: **CHRIS SOTOMAYOR**

LETTERER: **VC's CLAYTON COWLES**

COVER ARTISTS: **MIKE CHOI & GURU e-FX**

ASSISTANT EDITOR: **JAKE THOMAS**

ASSOCIATE EDITOR: **LAUREN SANKOVITCH**

EDITOR: **TOM BREVOORT**

EDITOR IN CHIEF: AXEL ALONSO
CHIEF CREATIVE OFFICER: JOE QUESADA
PUBLISHER: DAN BUCKLEY
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: ALAN FINE

**BEFORE THE FUTURE
WAS SAVED.**



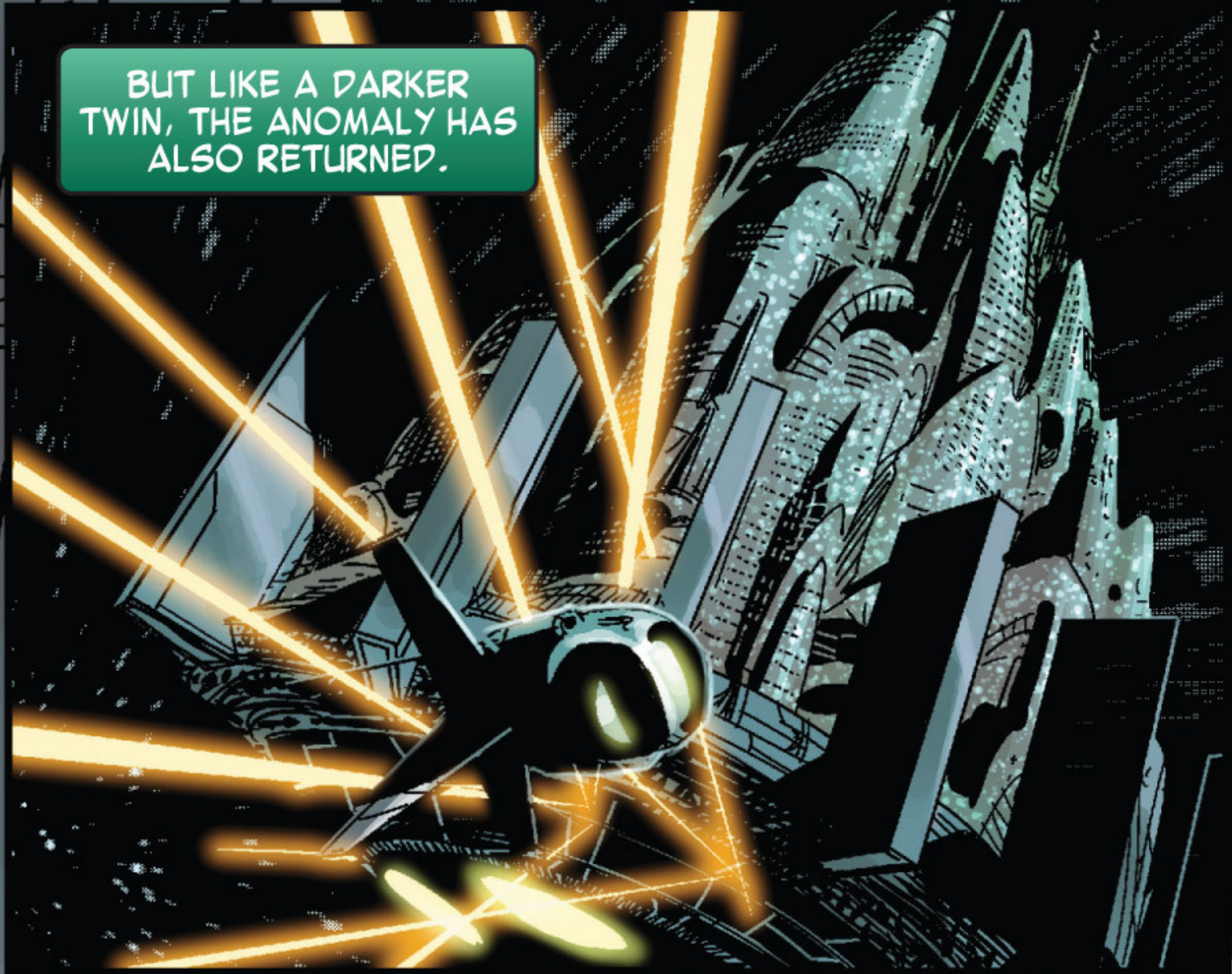
WE RETREAT
FROM EARTH.

AND AS THE
MULTITUDE
SINGS...

I TUNNEL
WITHIN.

I BASK IN
THEIR SONG--FOR
THE SUPREMOR
LIVES AGAIN.

I AM...WE
ARE...REBORN.

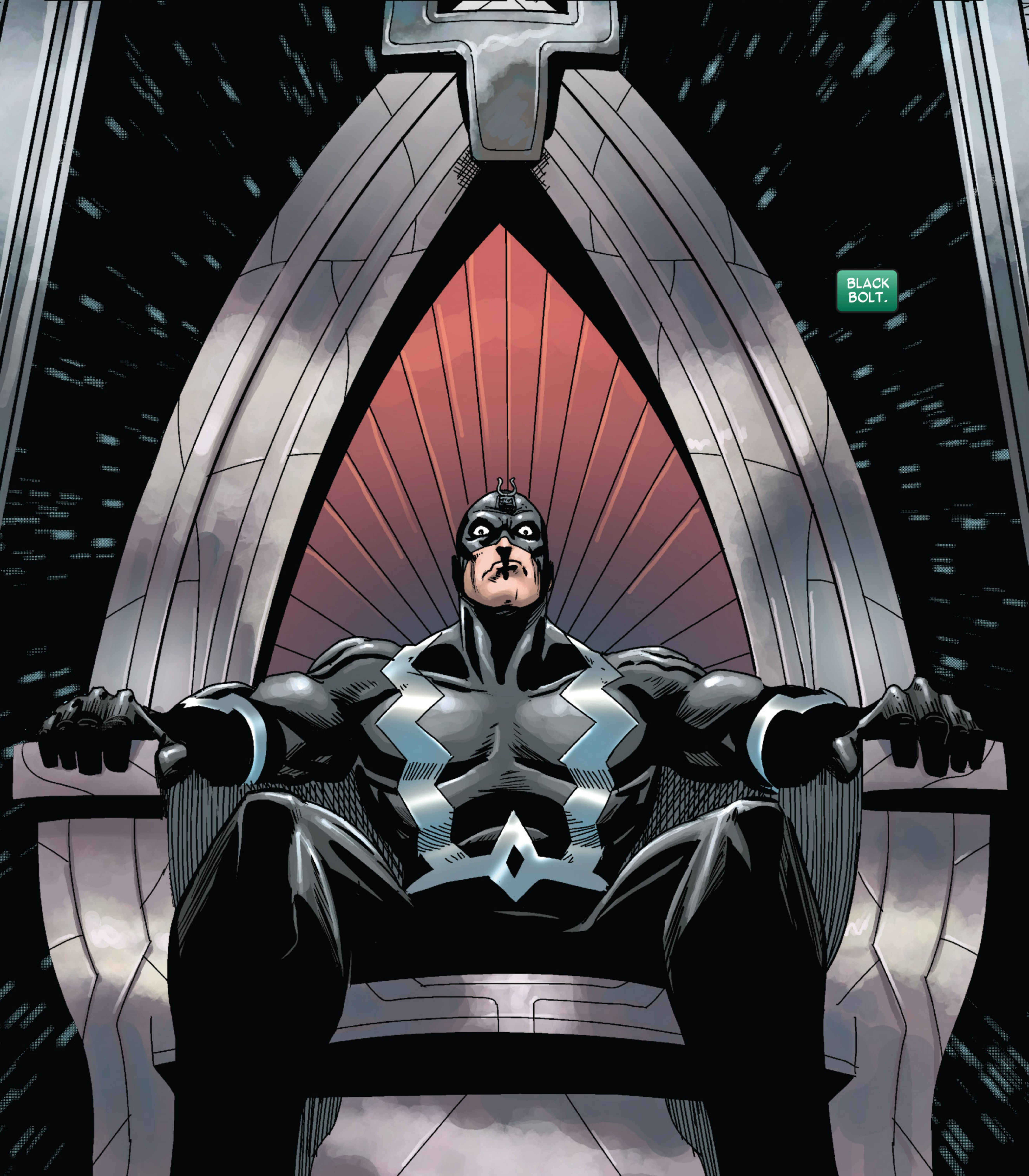


BUT LIKE A DARKER
TWIN, THE ANOMALY HAS
ALSO RETURNED.

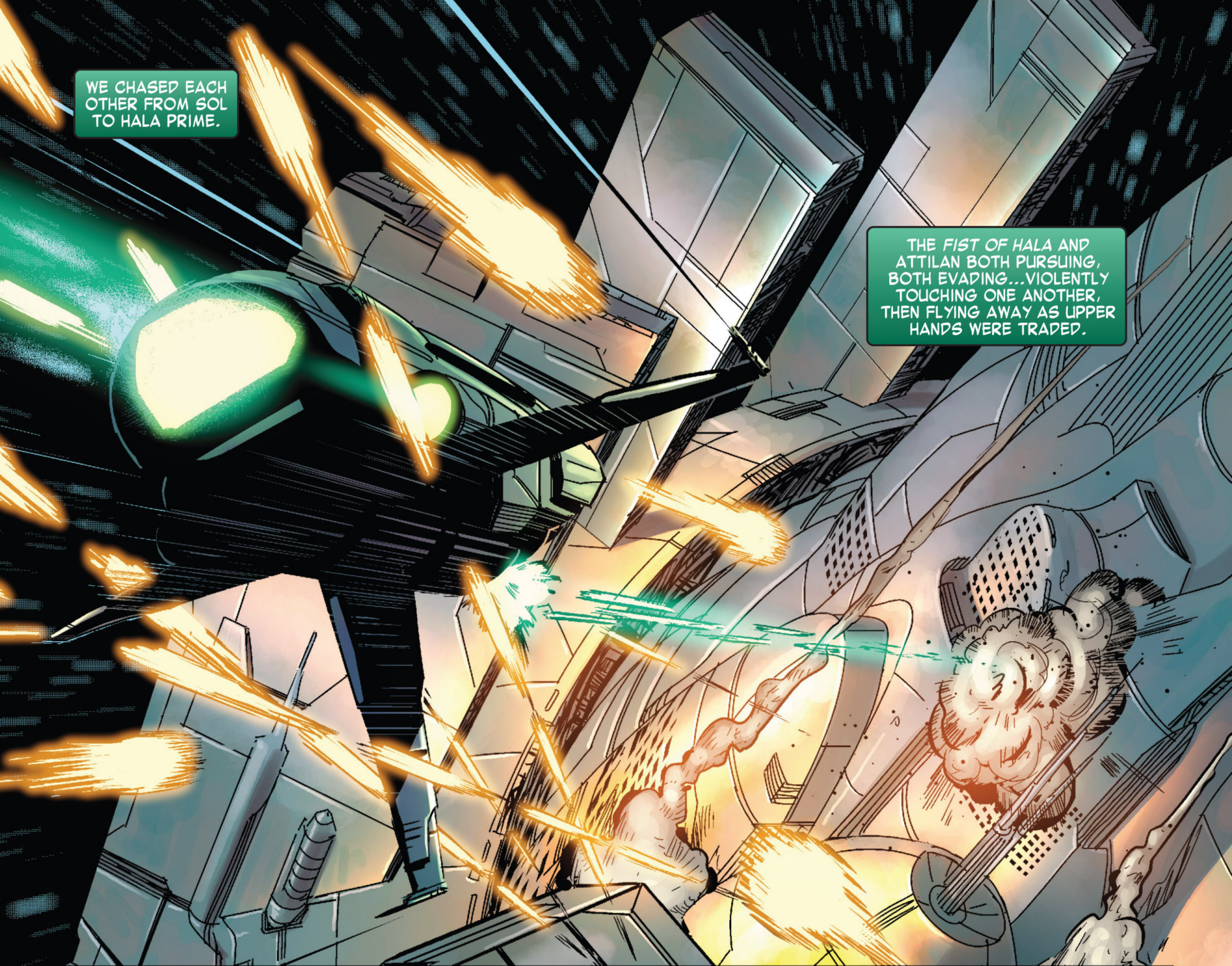


THE MIDNIGHT
KING.

MY INHUMAN
KILLER.



BLACK
BOLT.



WE CHASED EACH OTHER FROM SOL TO HALA PRIME.

THE FIST OF HALA AND ATTILAN BOTH PURSUING, BOTH EVAPING...VIOLENTLY TOUCHING ONE ANOTHER, THEN FLYING AWAY AS UPPER HANDS WERE TRADED.



WE REPELLED FIVE RACES OF INHUMAN WARRIORS.



THEY SURVIVED THE ONSLAUGHT OF MY ACCUSER CORPS.



WE BATTLED ALL
THE WAY TO THE
HOMEWORLD...

AND THEN
THE UNEXPECTED
HAPPENED.



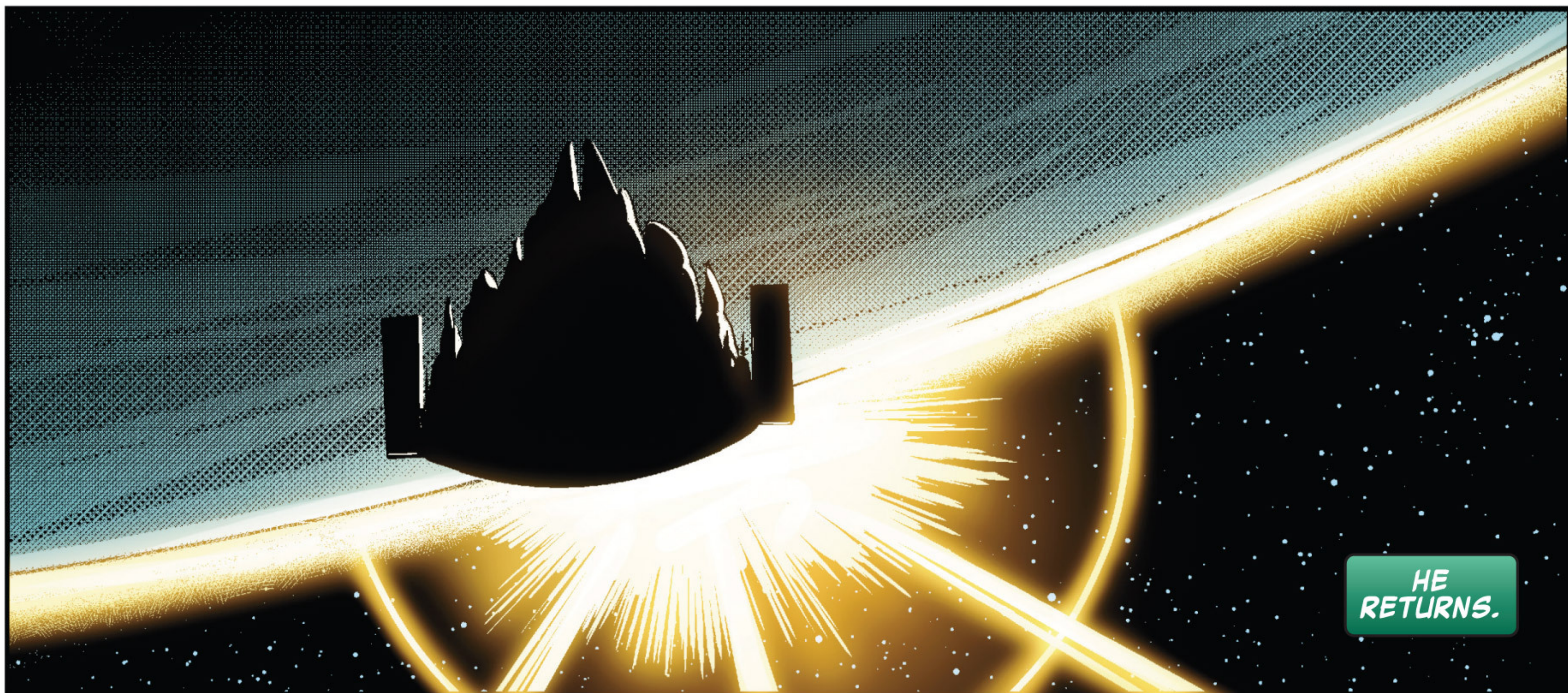
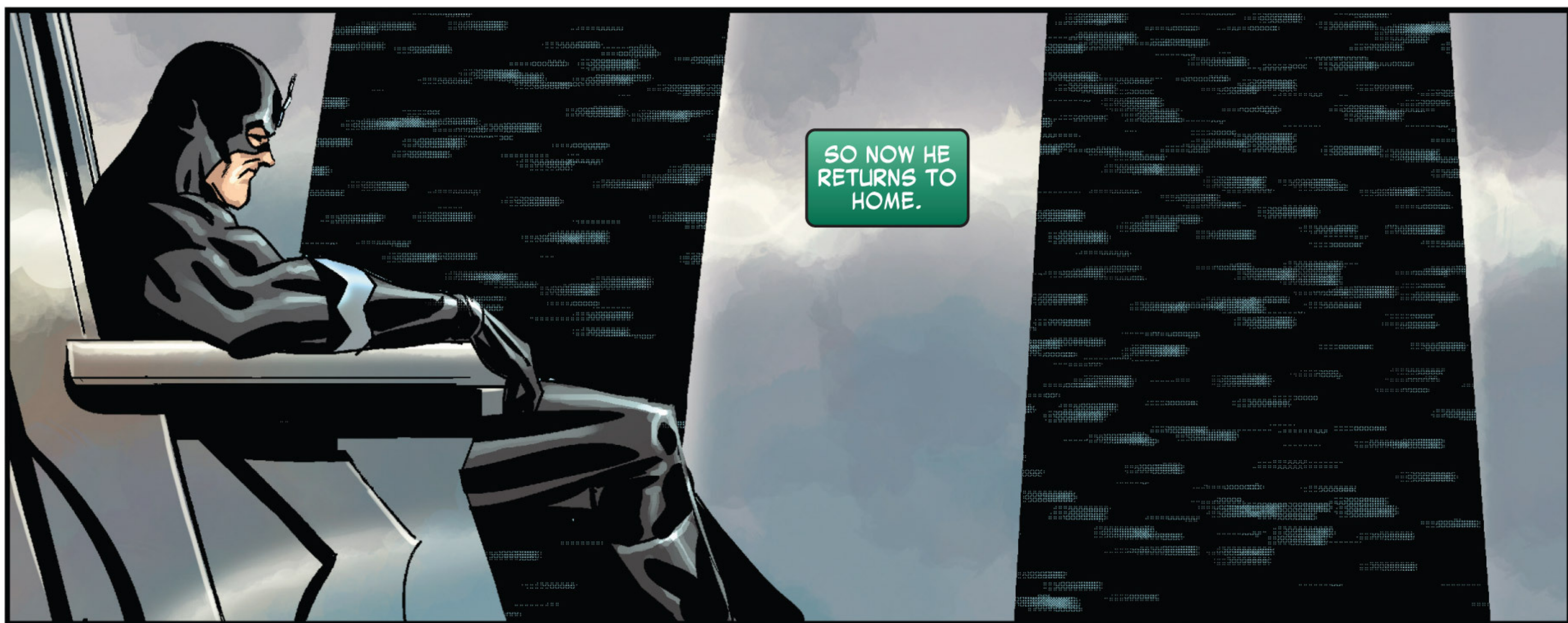
THE UNIVERSE
REWROTE THE
RULES.



AS A RESULT,
OUR STAR BEGAN
TO DIE.

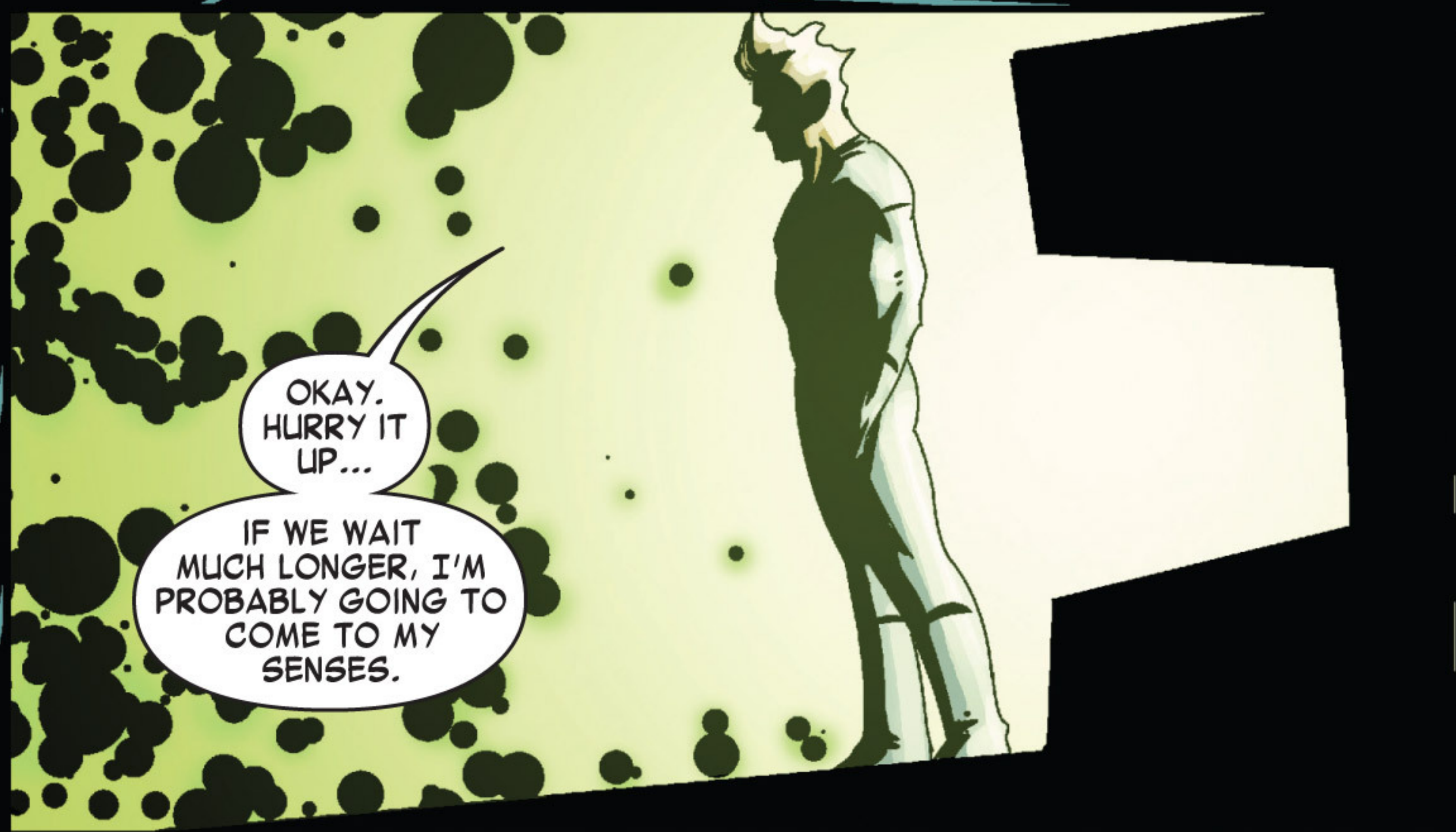


AND IN ITS HEALING,
THE INHUMAN KING
WAS GIVEN A NEW
WORD.



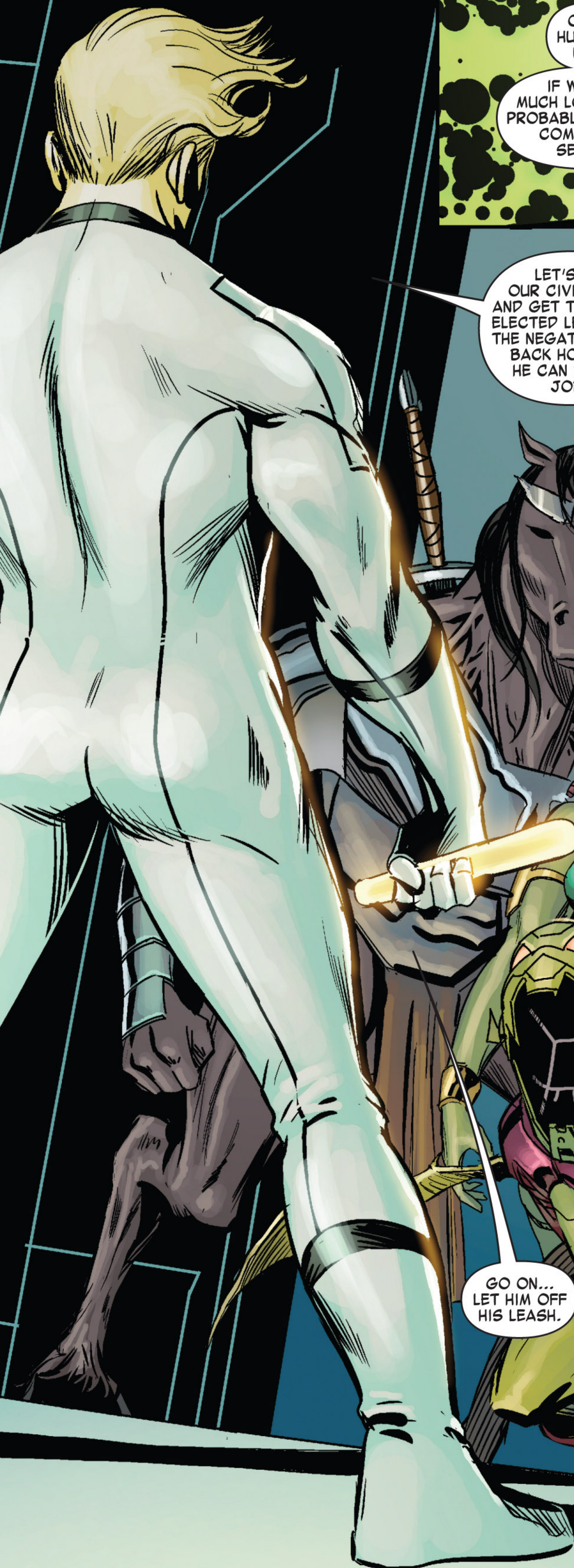


THE BAXTER BUILDING.
NOW.



OKAY.
HURRY IT
UP...

IF WE WAIT
MUCH LONGER, I'M
PROBABLY GOING TO
COME TO MY
SENSES.



LET'S DO
OUR CIVIC DUTY
AND GET THE NEWLY
ELECTED LEADER OF
THE NEGATIVE ZONE
BACK HOME SO
HE CAN DO HIS
JOB.

SSSSSSSSSSSSSS

GO ON...
LET HIM OFF
HIS LEASH.



IT IS NO SMALL THING TO HAVE THE LOYALTY OF A PEOPLE, ANNIHILUS.

SEE THAT YOU DO NOT WASTE THIS REBIRTH ON THE FOLLY OF PAST WAYS.



AND JUST TO MAKE SURE THAT YOU DON'T GET TOO FAR OUT OF LINE, I'LL BE KEEPING THE COSMIC CONTROL ROD WITH ME.

SO, I'D MAKE SURE I DIDN'T TAKE YOUR PEOPLE'S SUPPORT FOR GRANTED, BECAUSE YOU SURE WON'T HAVE A WAY TO WHIP THEM INTO SUBMISSION THIS TIME.



YES. YES.

BETTER TO USE CANDIES AND LOVINGS AND SWEET MEATS AND--



SSSSSSSS!

SNAP



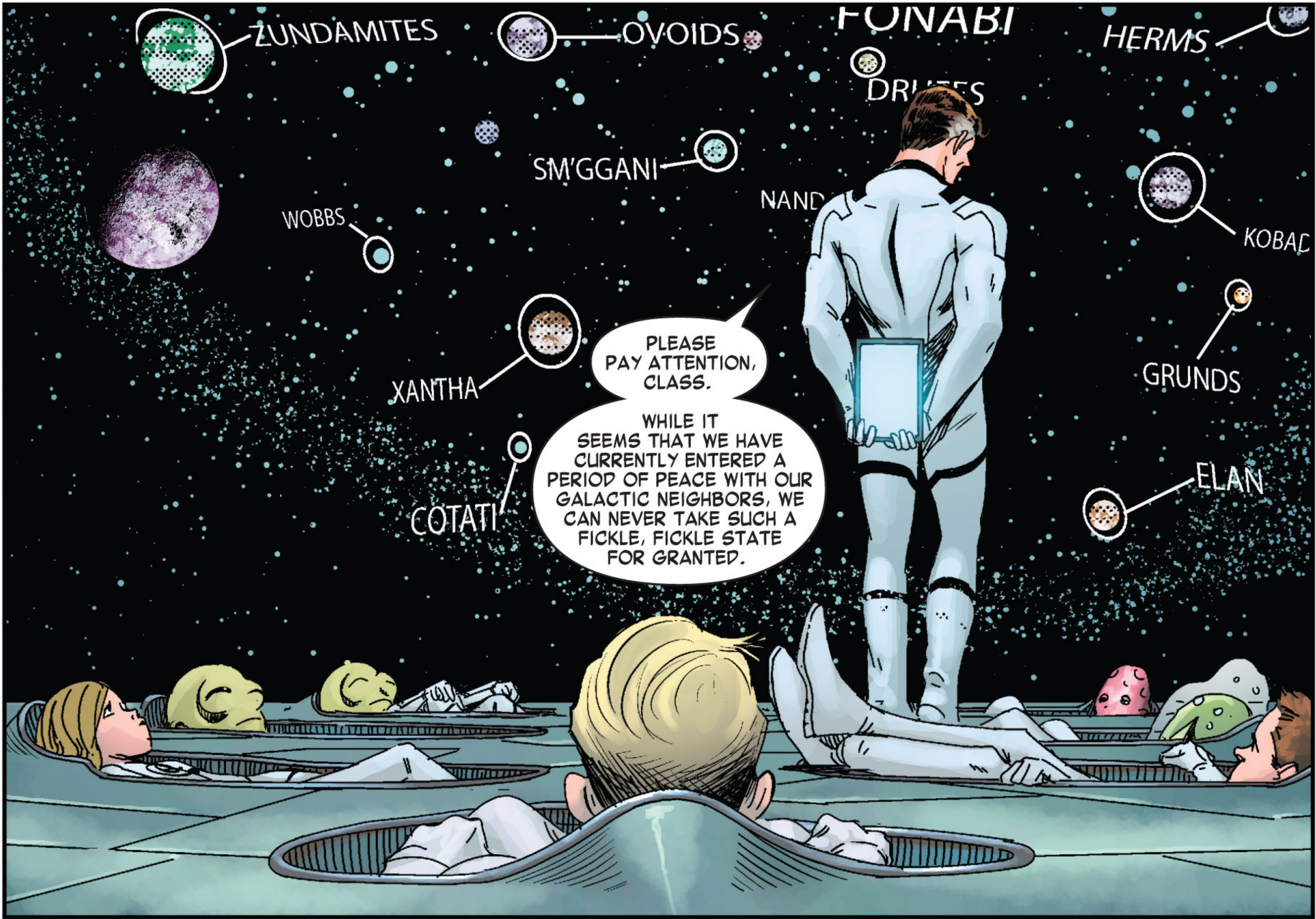
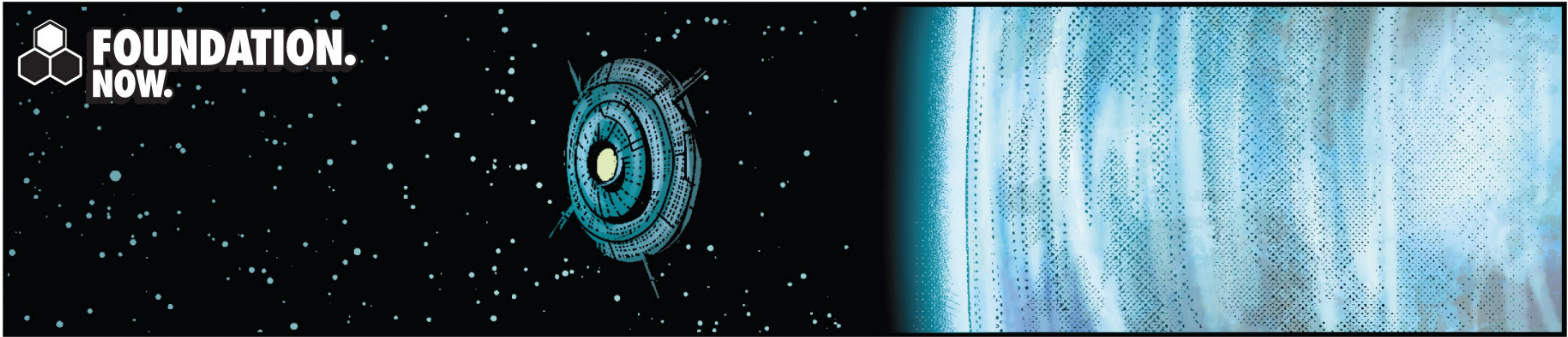
AND RENDING

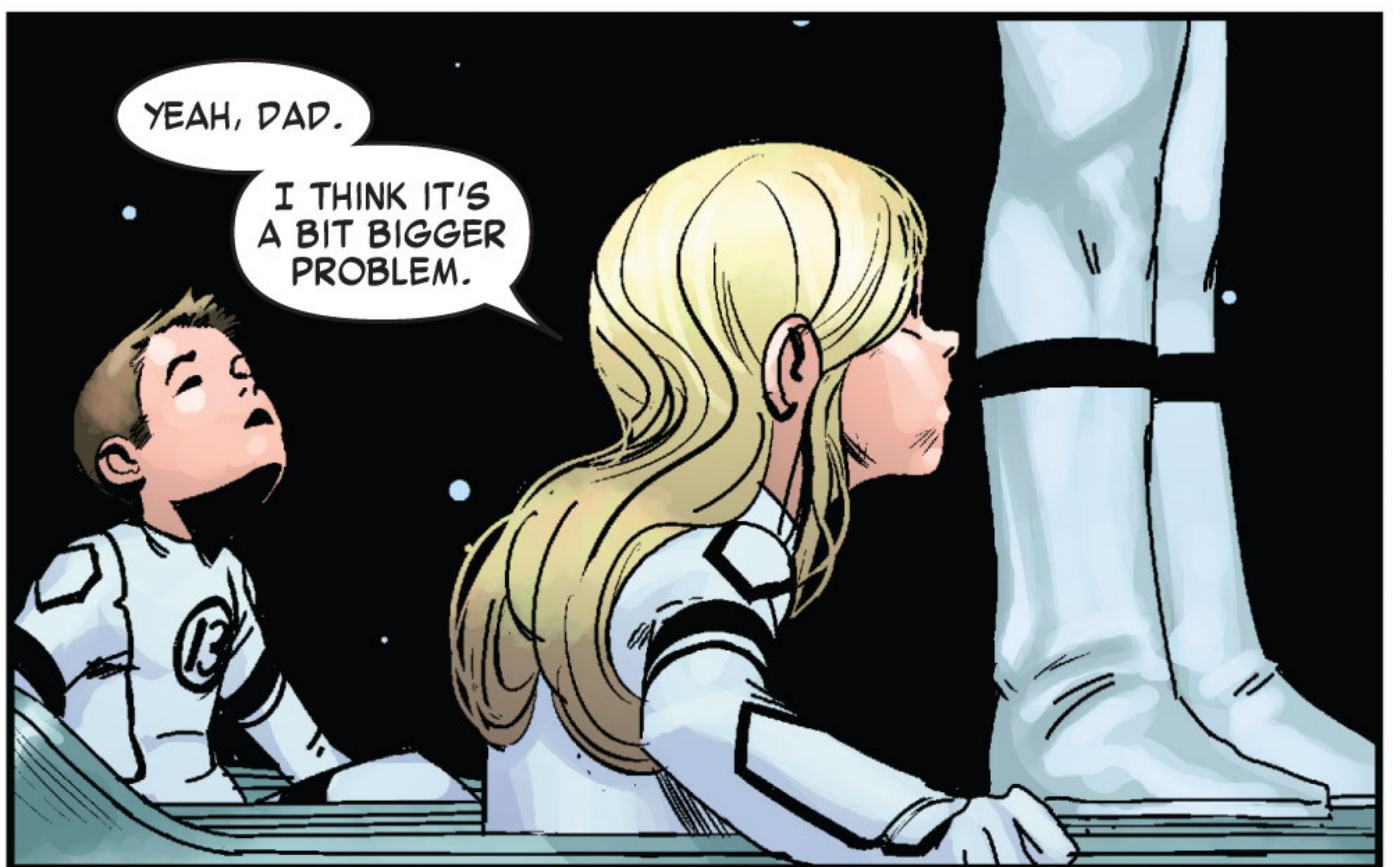
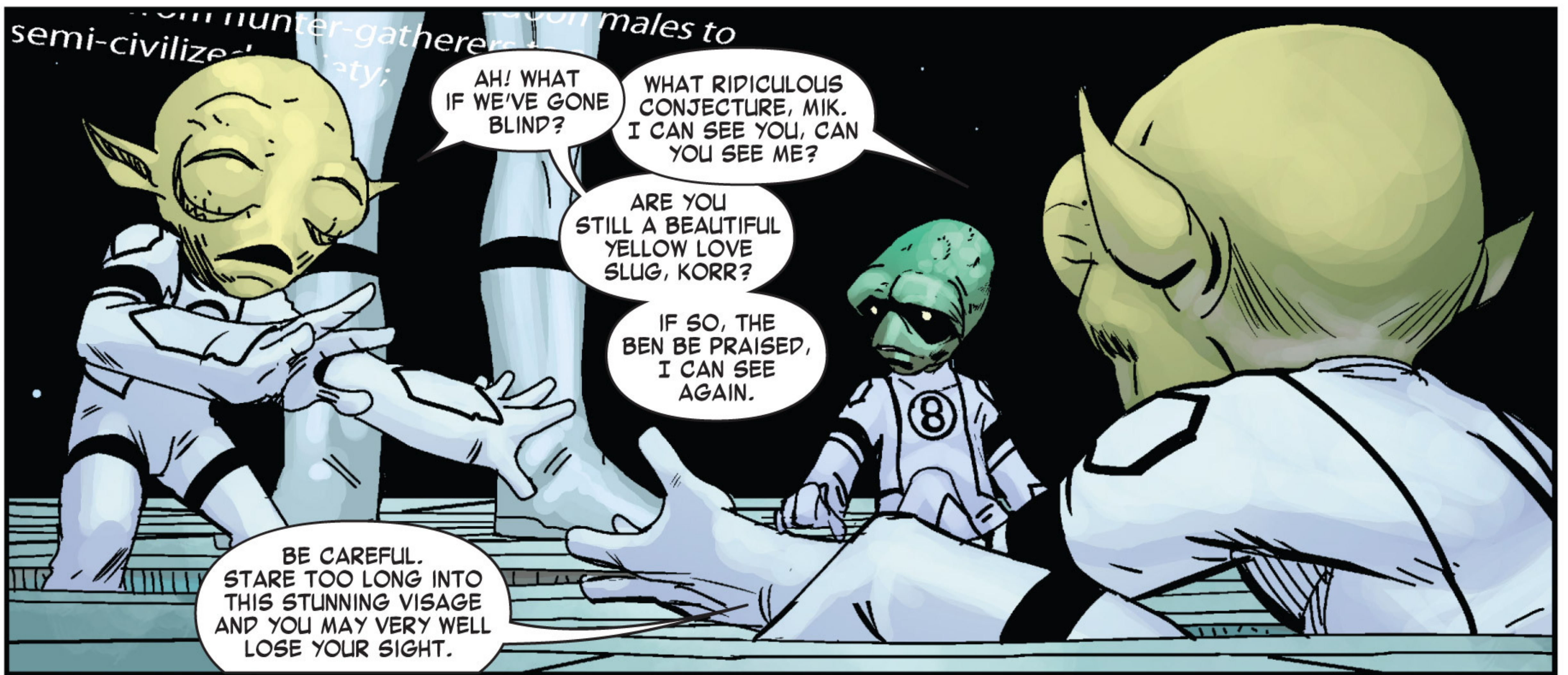
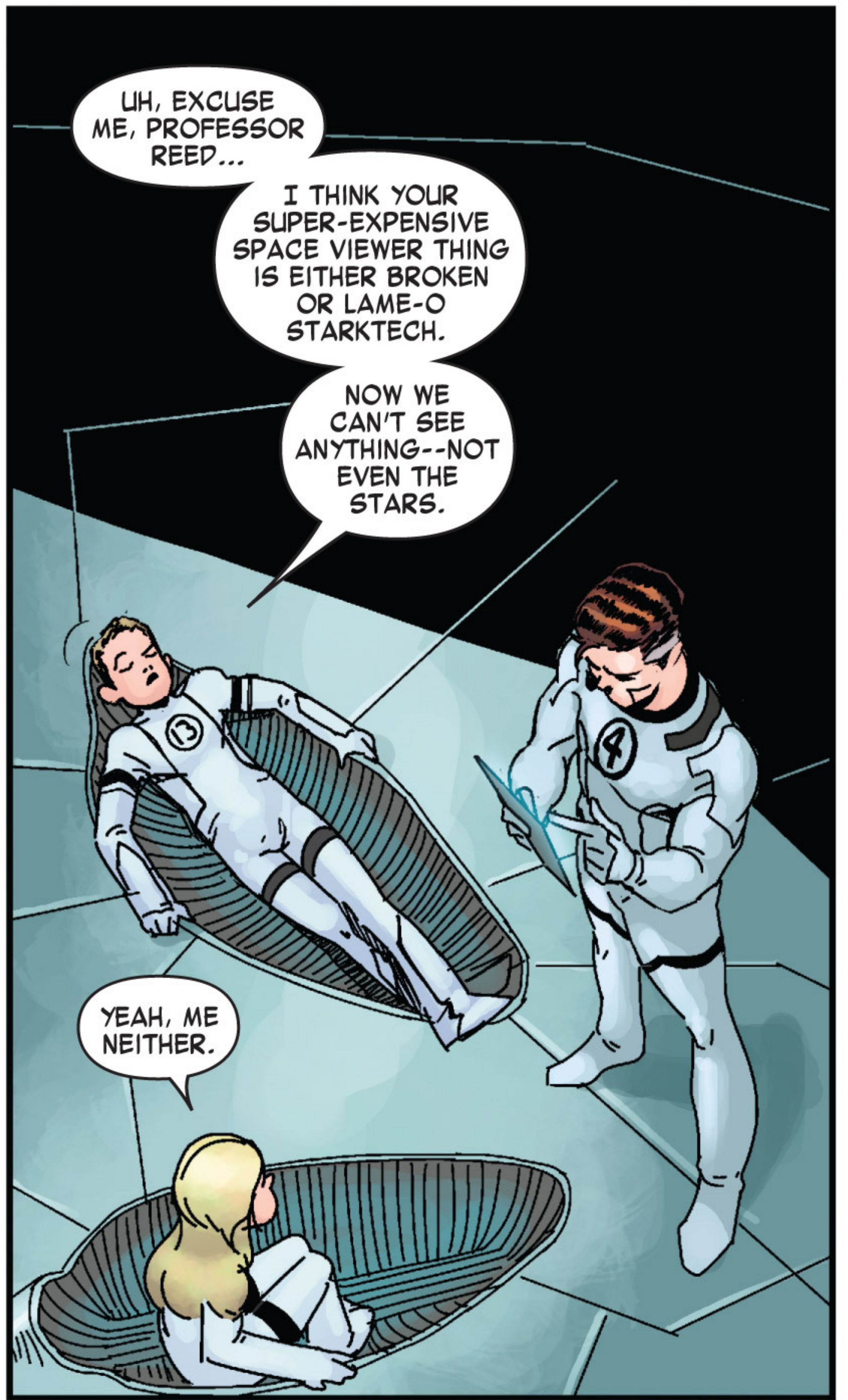
AND TEARING

AND BLEEDING

AND SCREAMING...







AH!
I SEE...

"...THE INHUMANS
HAVE MADE IT BACK
FROM HALA."



ATTILAN.

HOW COULD WE CLAIM
A WORLD IF WE WERE
NOT WORTHY?

AND HOW COULD WE BE
WORTHY IF WE HADN'T
TRIED THE IMPOSSIBLE?

THEY ASKED FOR A
BATTLE THAT COULD
NOT BE WON.

AND THEN
THEY DID.

THE BLOOD-PRICE
WAS PAID...THEY WERE
THE **VERY BEST** WE
HAD TO OFFER:

OUR MOST
VALIANT.

OUR SONS AND
DAUGHTERS.

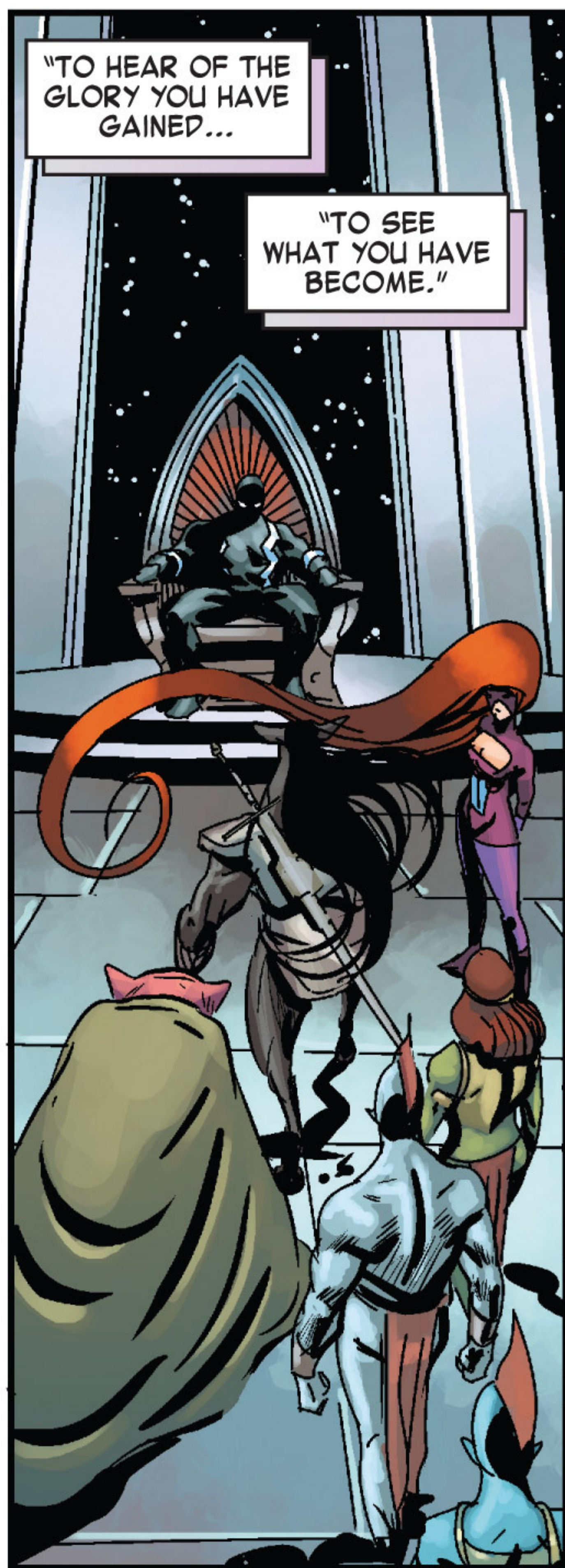
MOTHER.
WE HAVE COME
HOME...

VICTORIOUS.

YES. YES...

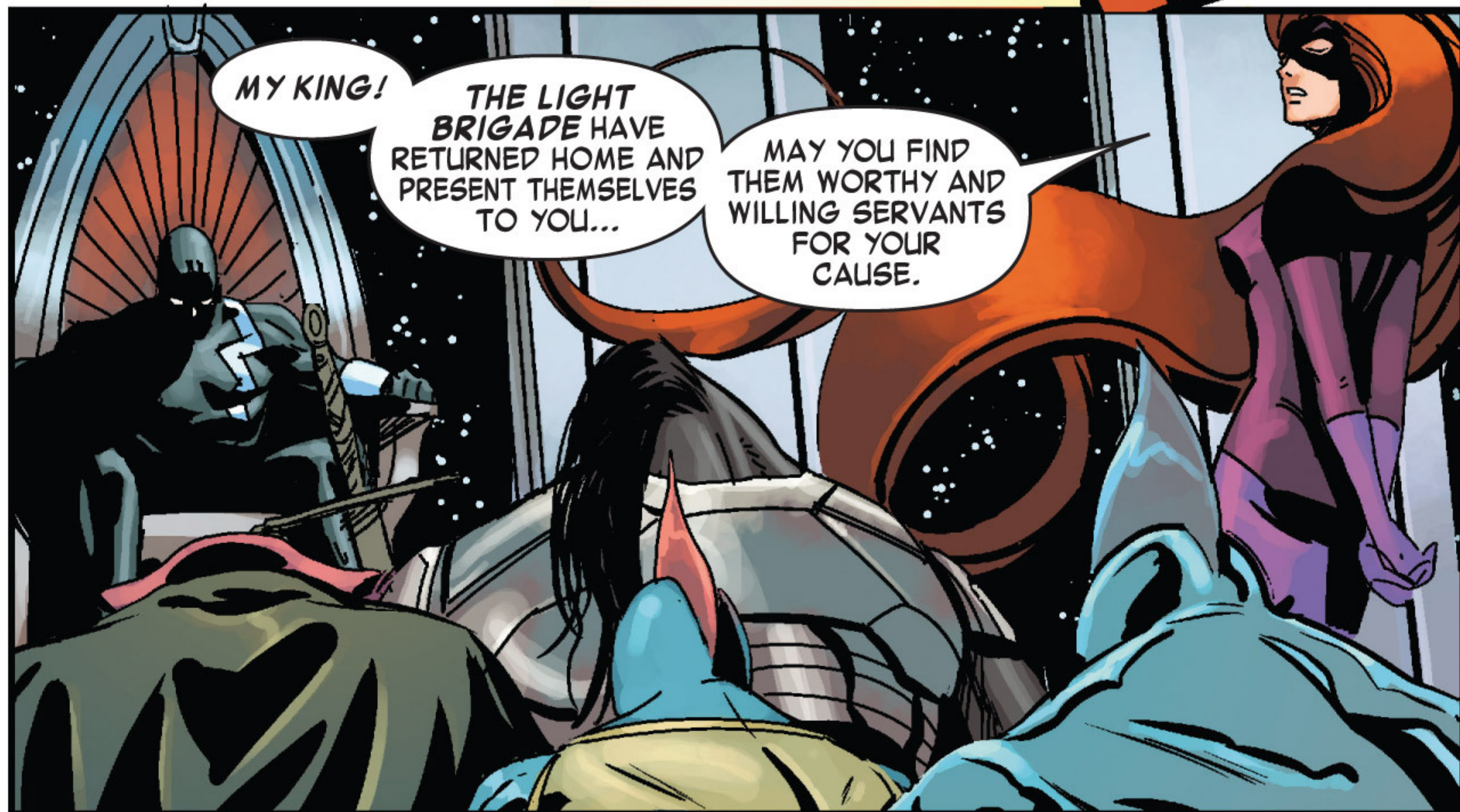
MY SON, YOU
ARE THE FIRST
OFFERING EVER
TO RETURN.

YOUR NEW
KING--OUR
KING--WAITS
FOR YOU...



"TO HEAR OF THE GLORY YOU HAVE GAINED..."

"TO SEE WHAT YOU HAVE BECOME."



MY KING!

THE LIGHT BRIGADE HAVE RETURNED HOME AND PRESENT THEMSELVES TO YOU...

MAY YOU FIND THEM WORTHY AND WILLING SERVANTS FOR YOUR CAUSE.

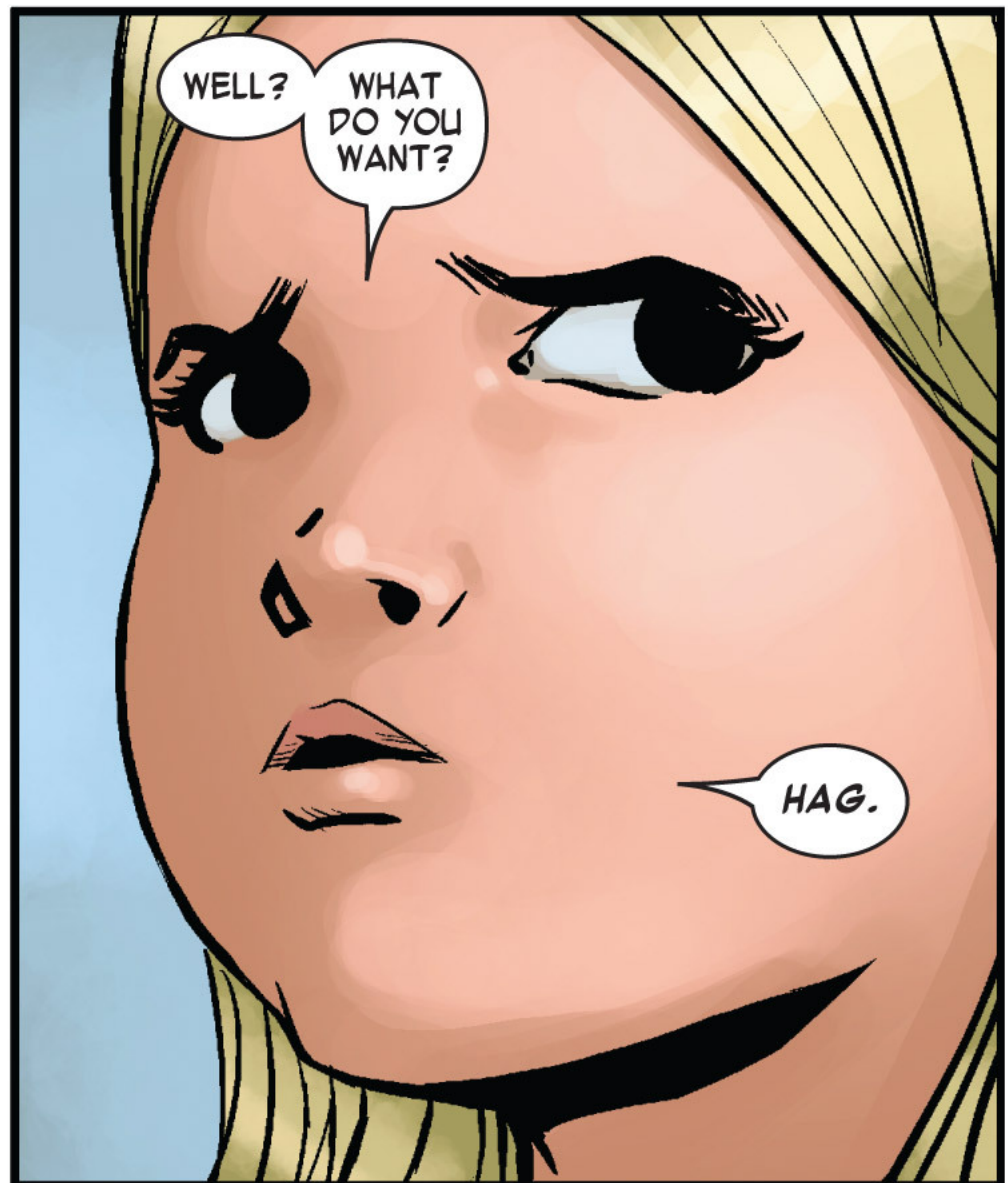
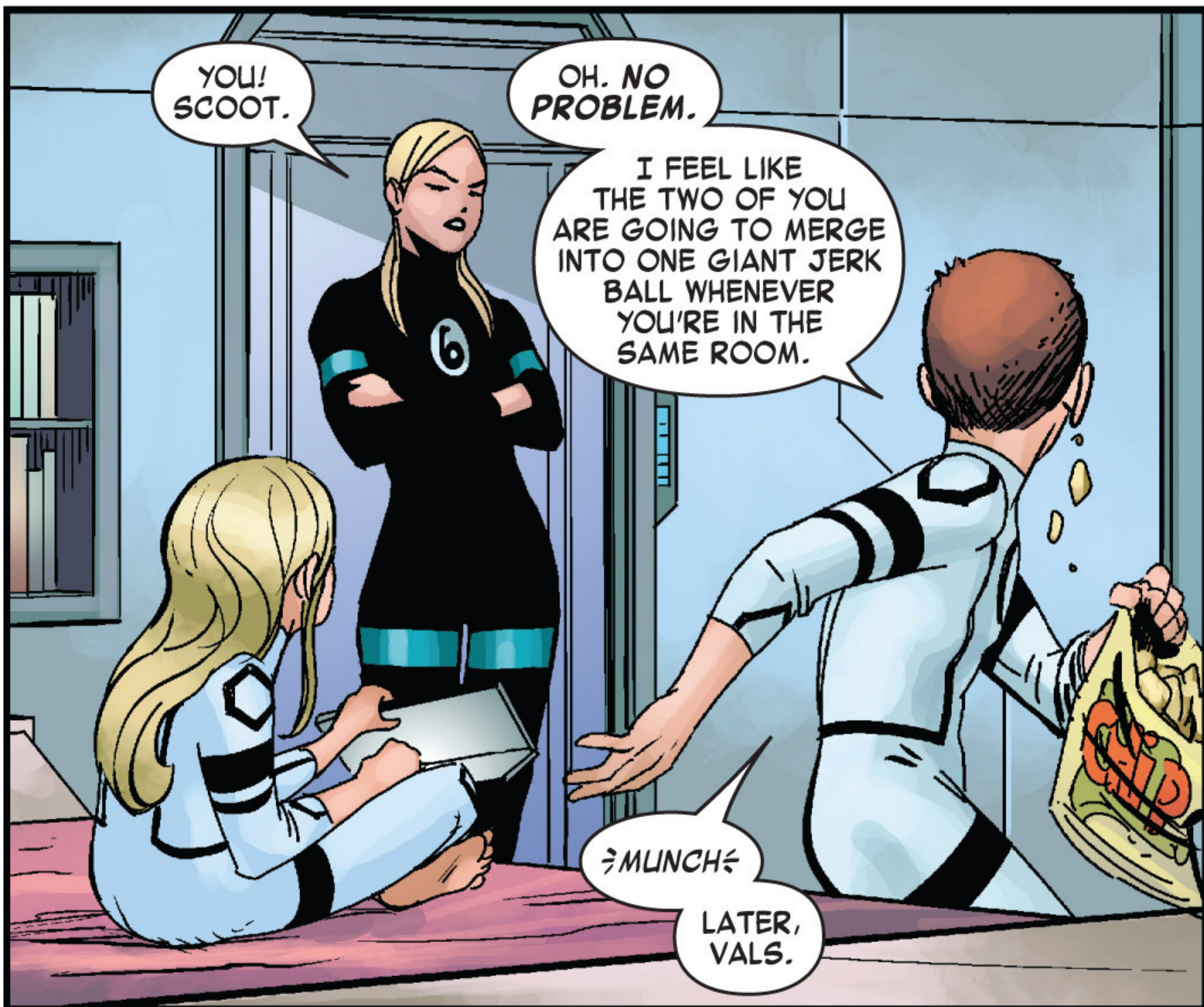
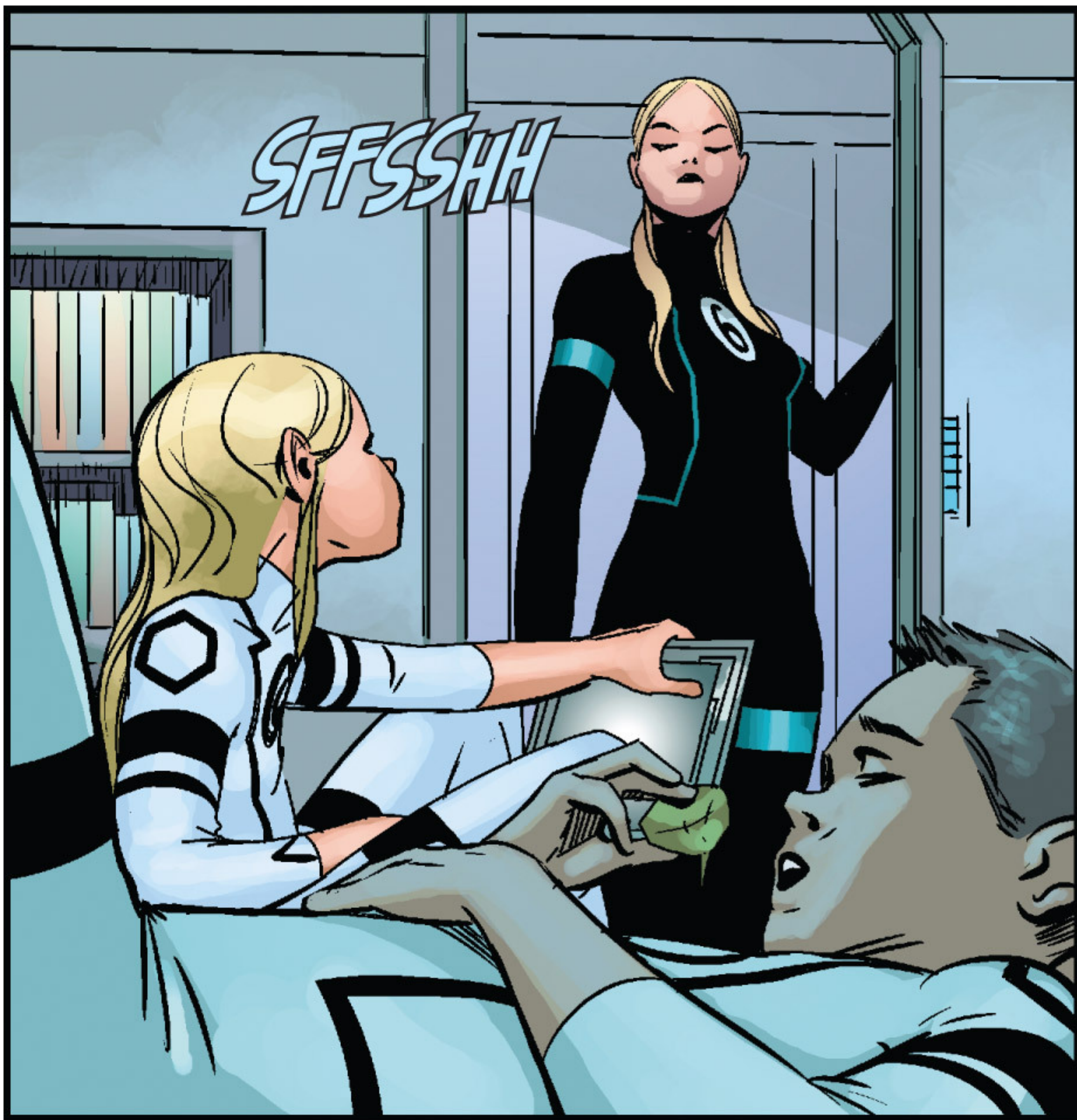
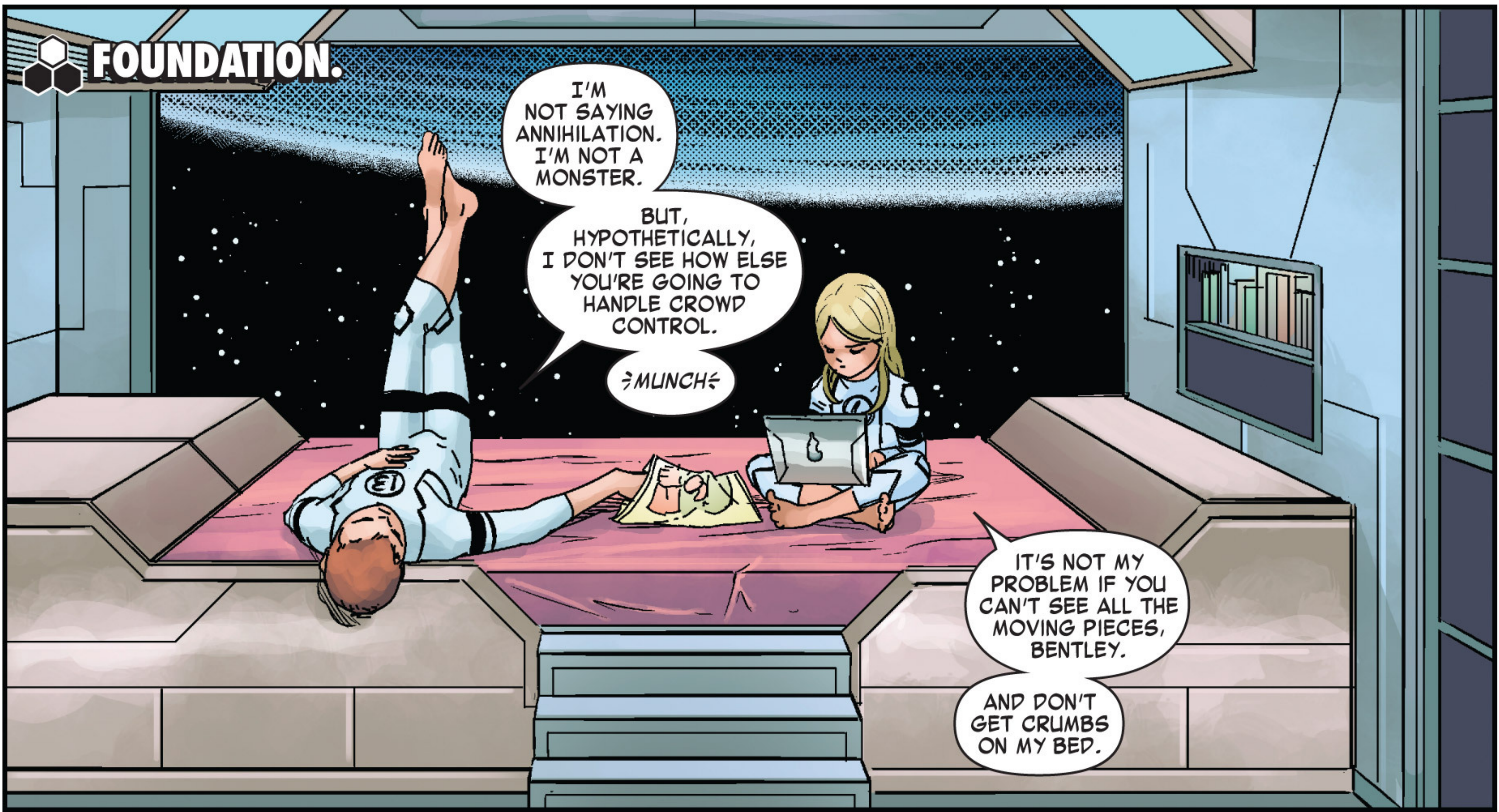


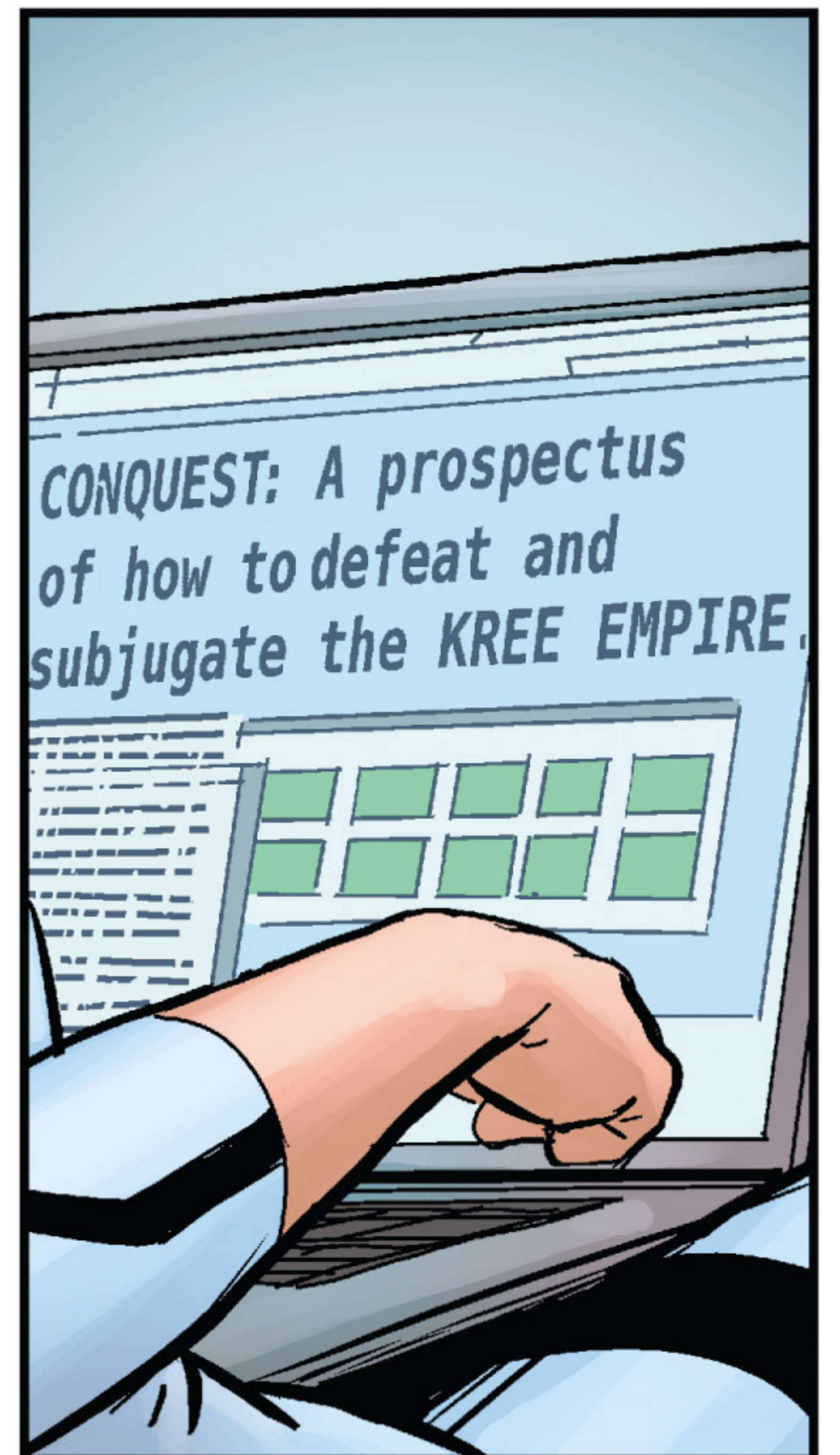
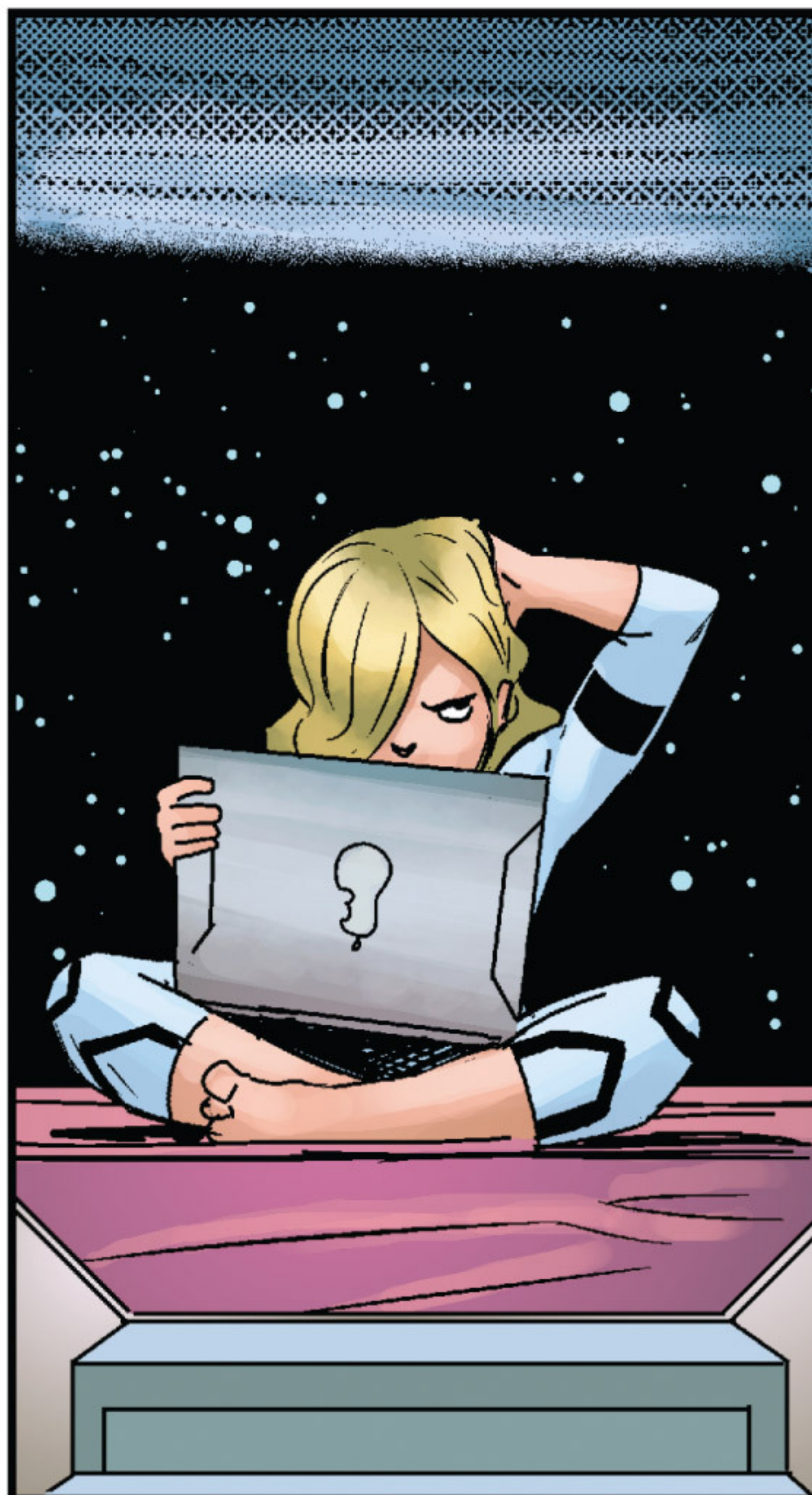
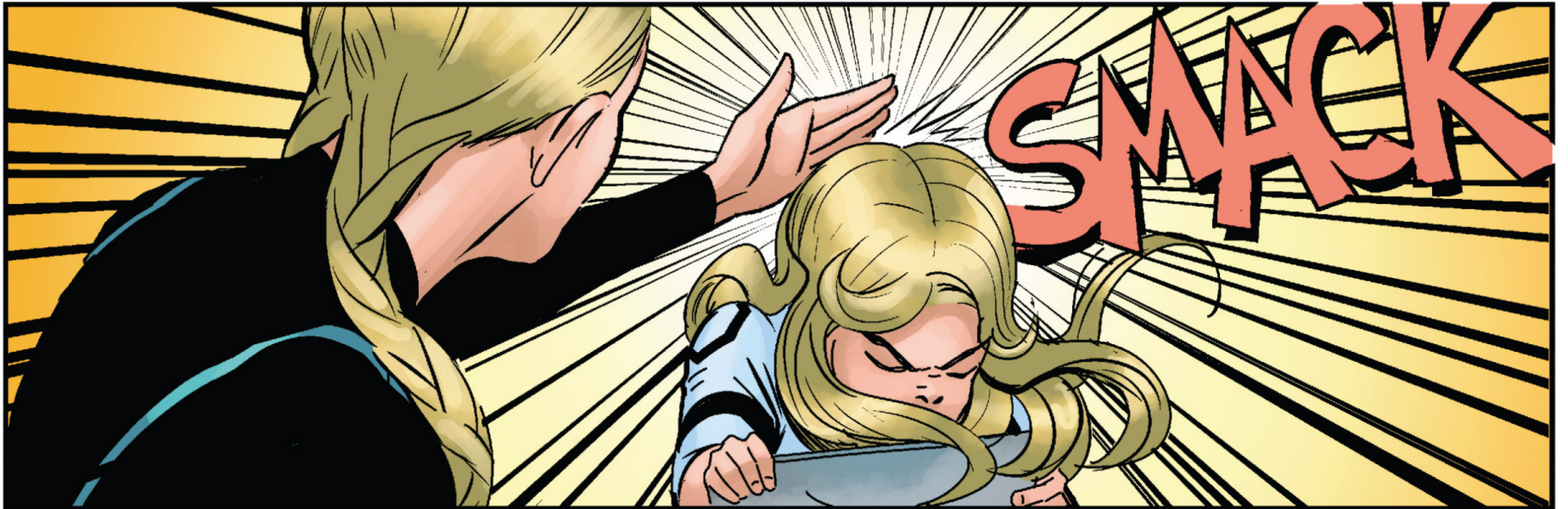
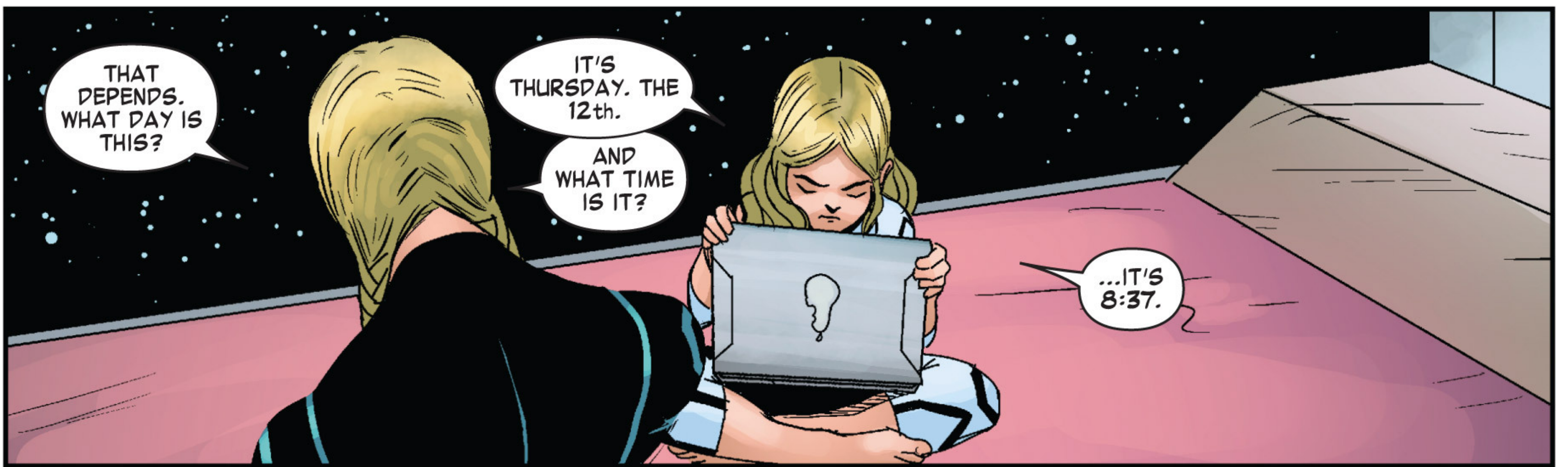
BLACK BOLT SAYS HE WILL NOT JUDGE SUCH NOBLE WARRIORS AS THESE...

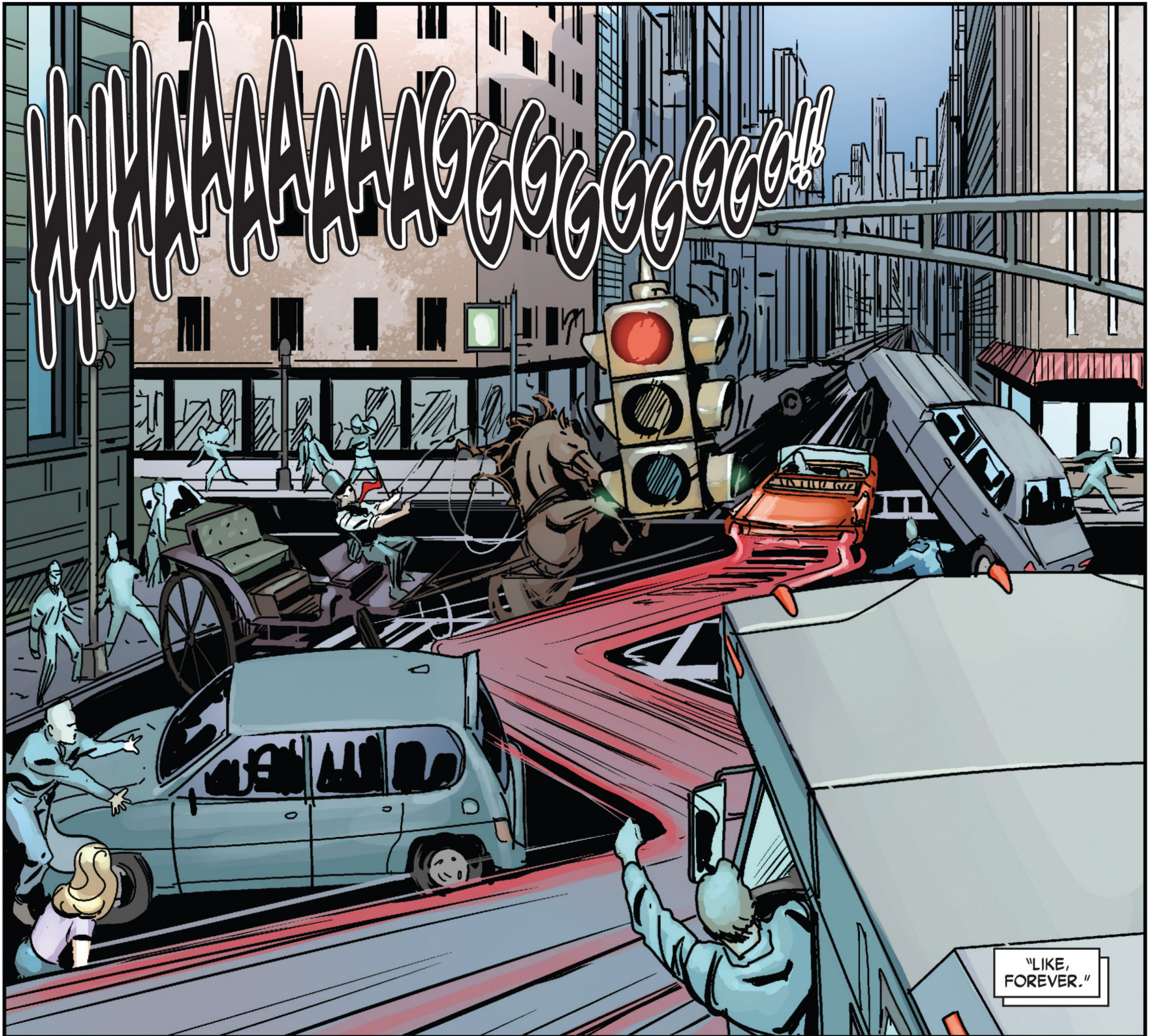
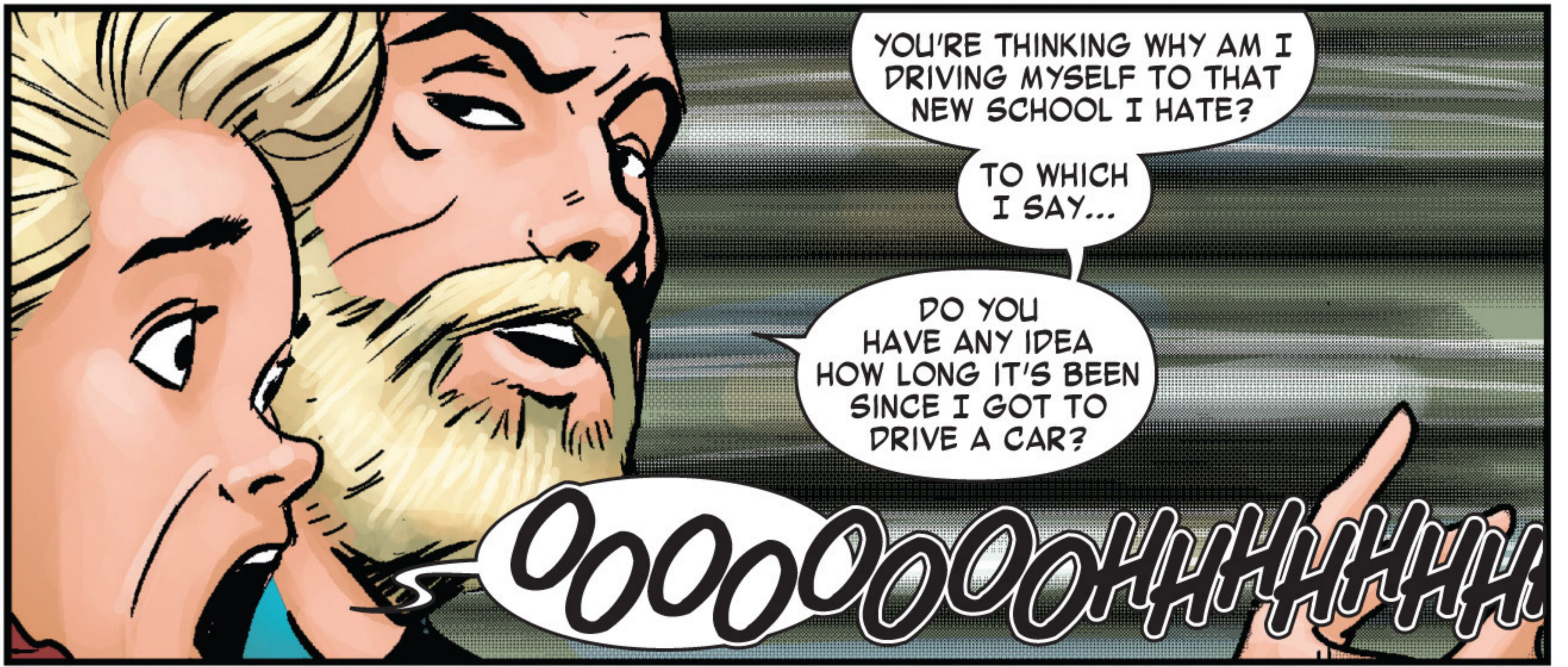
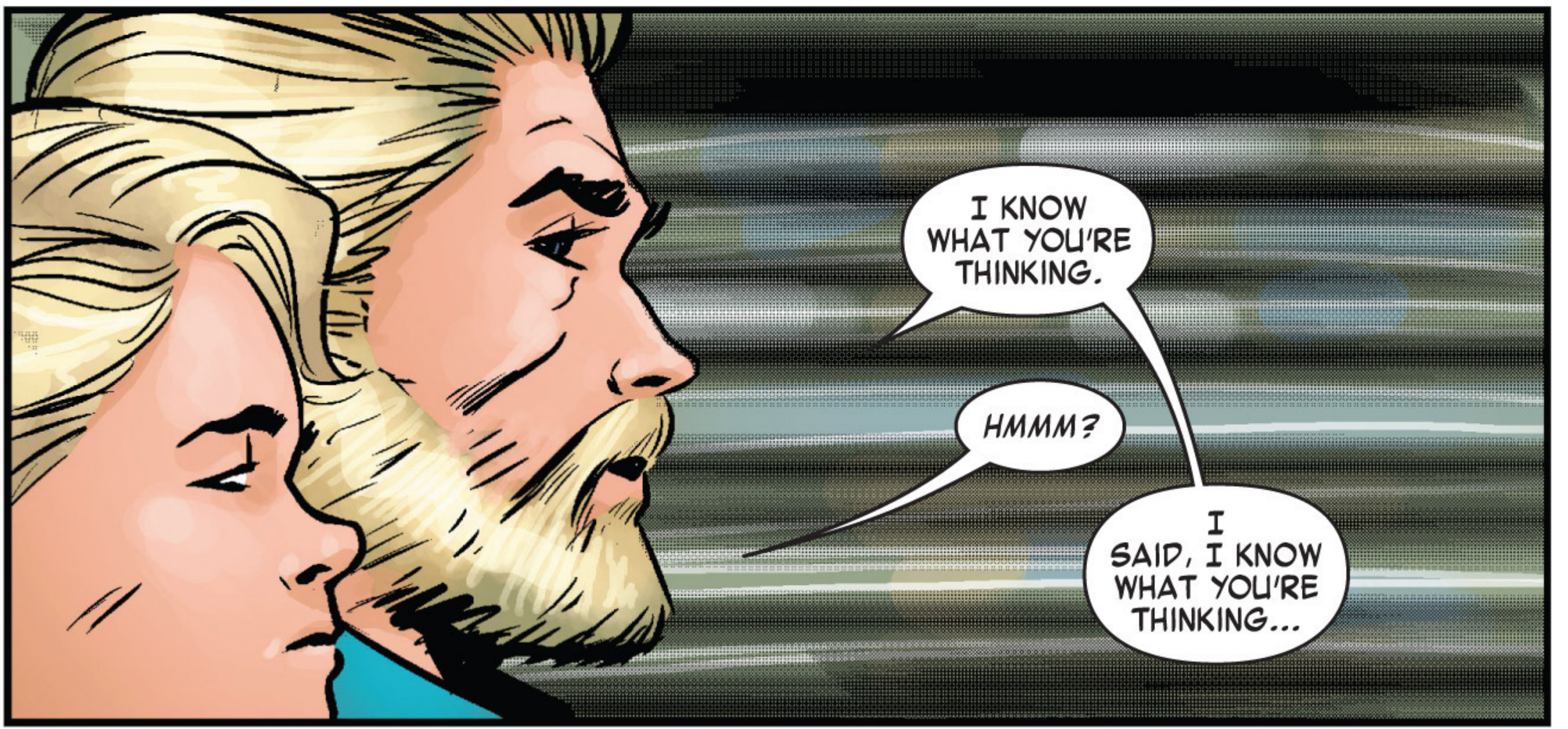
HE ONLY WELCOMES YOU HOME.

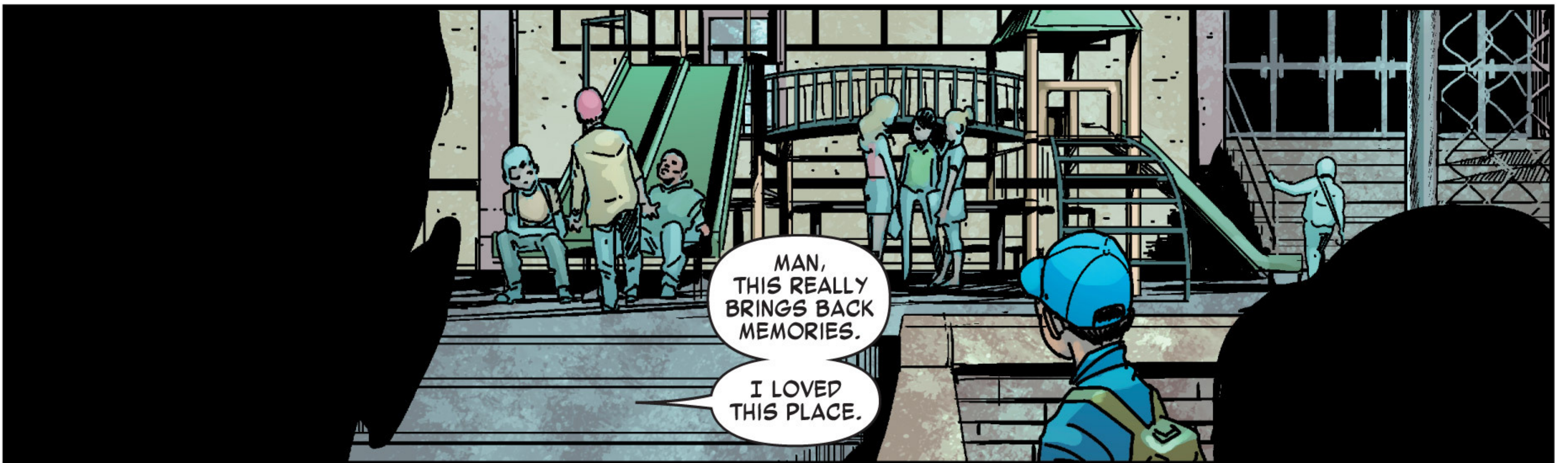
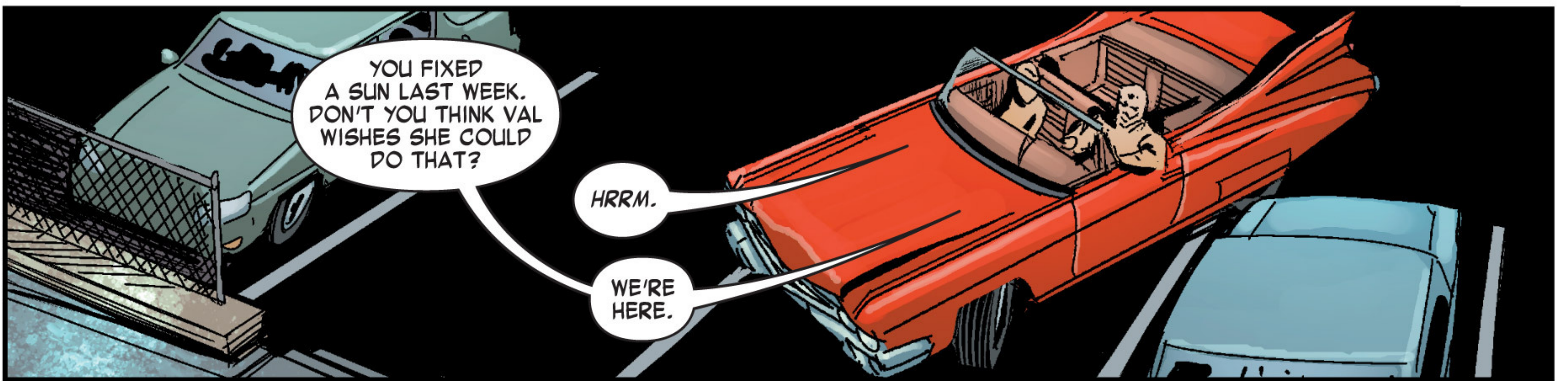
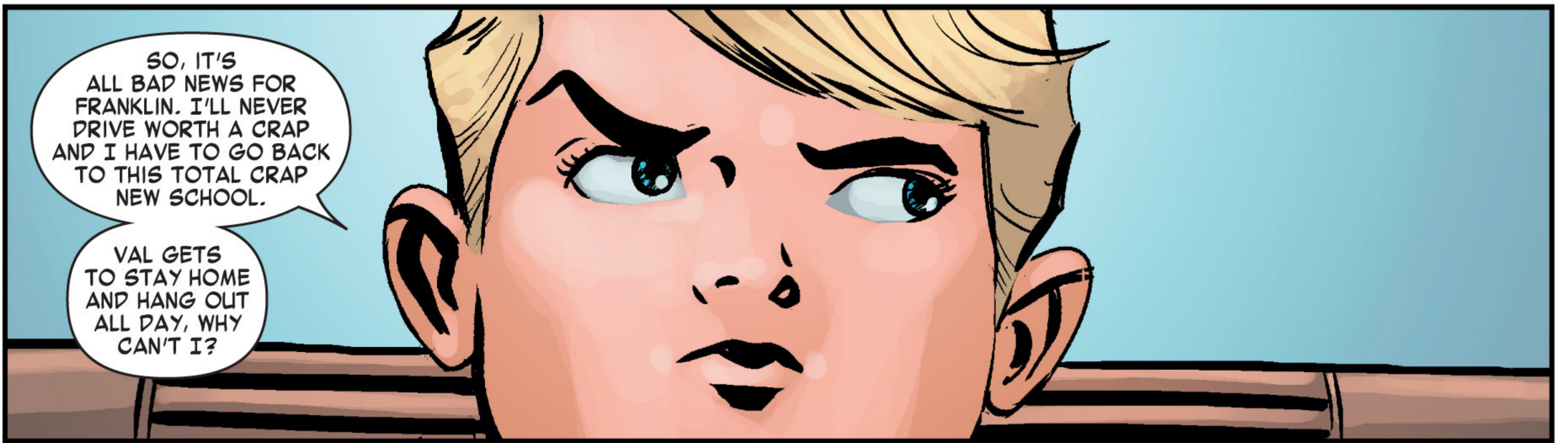
BROTHERS. SISTERS. WE ARE ALL ONE NOW.

ALMOST.





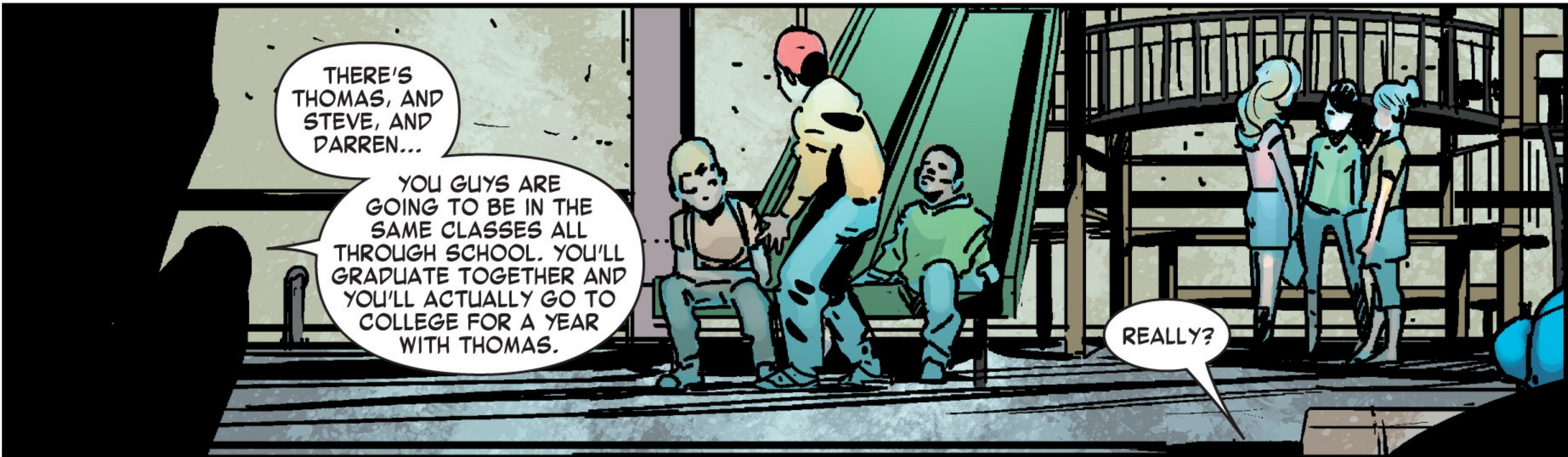






SURE. SOUNDS LIKE FUN, BUT I WOULDN'T WANT YOU TO MISS OUT ON ALL THE COOL STUFF THAT'S GOING TO GO ON HERE.

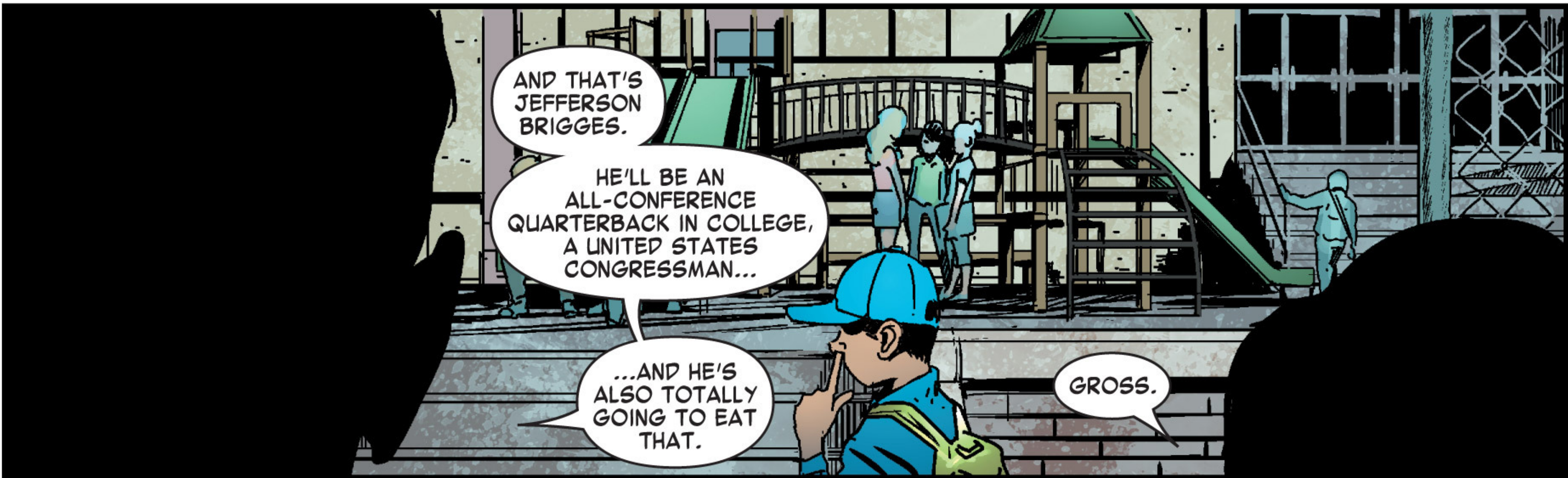
LOOK...



THERE'S THOMAS, AND STEVE, AND DARREN...

YOU GUYS ARE GOING TO BE IN THE SAME CLASSES ALL THROUGH SCHOOL. YOU'LL GRADUATE TOGETHER AND YOU'LL ACTUALLY GO TO COLLEGE FOR A YEAR WITH THOMAS.

REALLY?

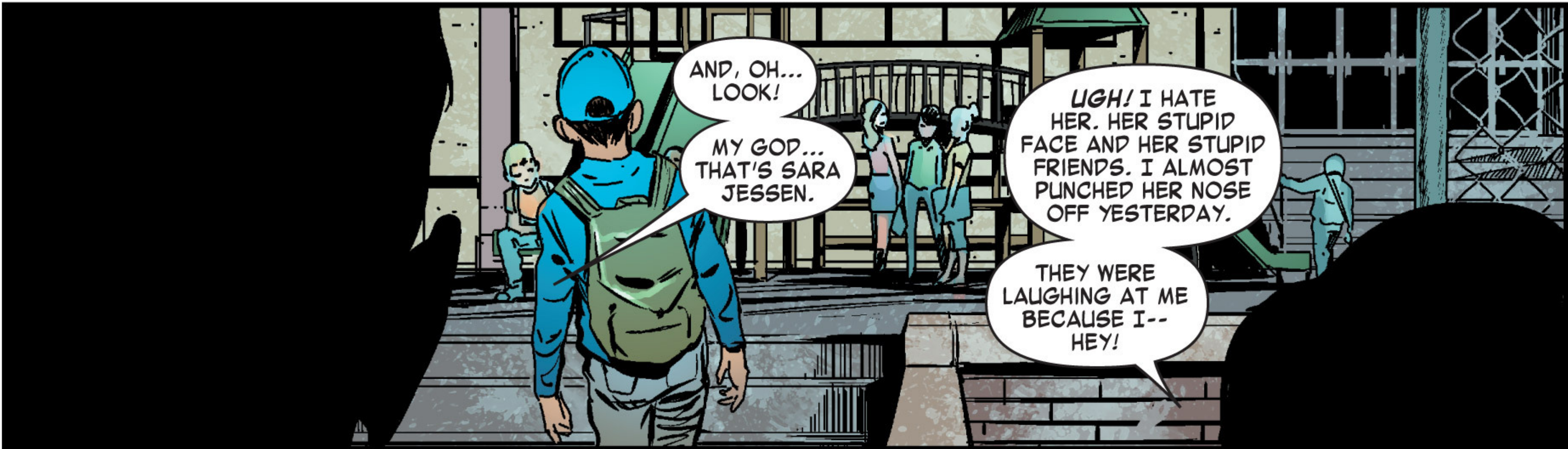


AND THAT'S JEFFERSON BRIGGES.

HE'LL BE AN ALL-CONFERENCE QUARTERBACK IN COLLEGE, A UNITED STATES CONGRESSMAN...

...AND HE'S ALSO TOTALLY GOING TO EAT THAT.

GROSS.

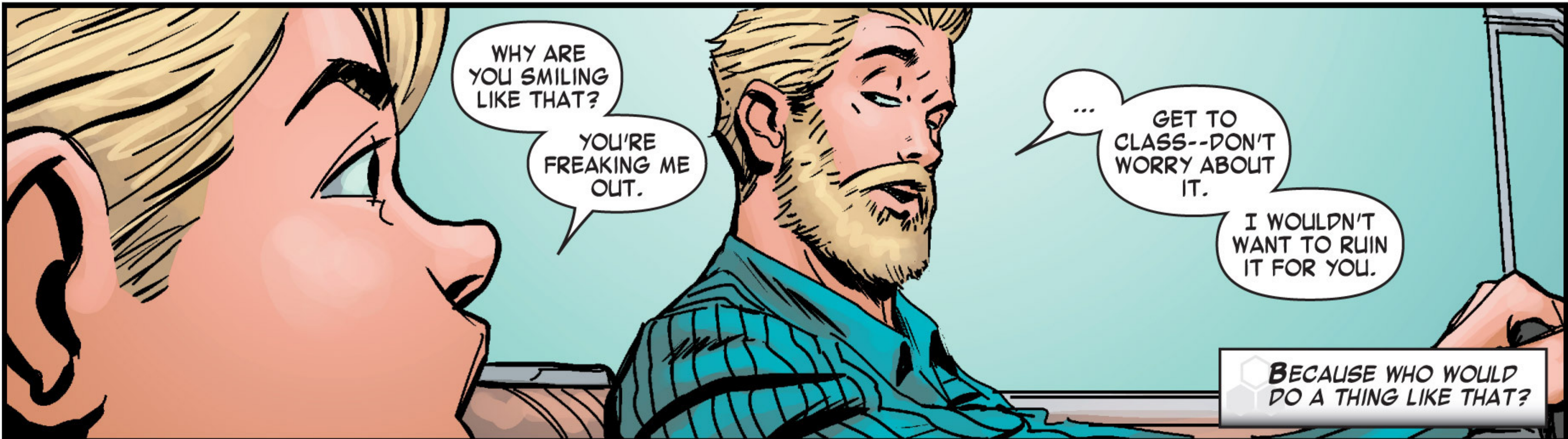


AND, OH... LOOK!

MY GOD... THAT'S SARA JESSEN.

UGH! I HATE HER. HER STUPID FACE AND HER STUPID FRIENDS. I ALMOST PUNCHED HER NOSE OFF YESTERDAY.

THEY WERE LAUGHING AT ME BECAUSE I-- HEY!



WHY ARE YOU SMILING LIKE THAT?

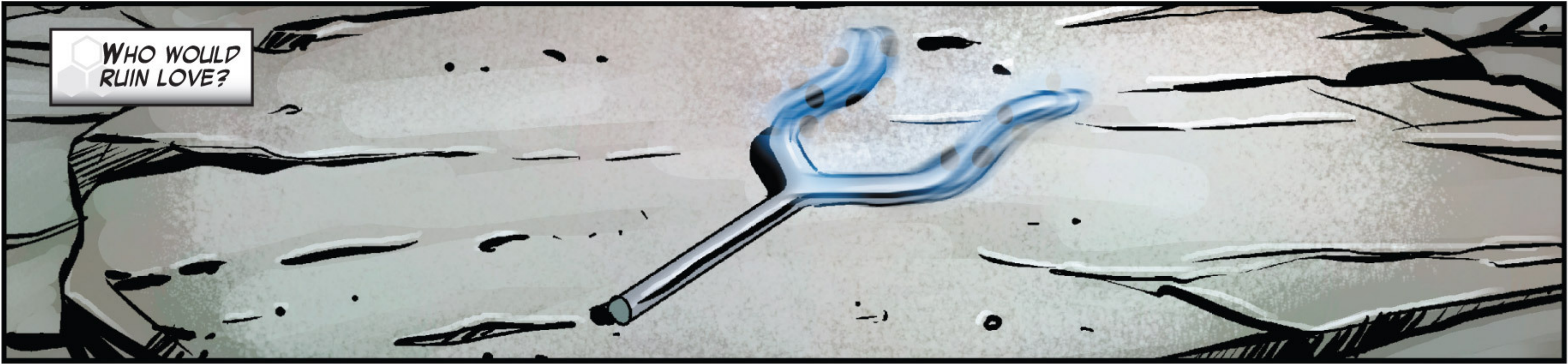
YOU'RE FREAKING ME OUT.

...

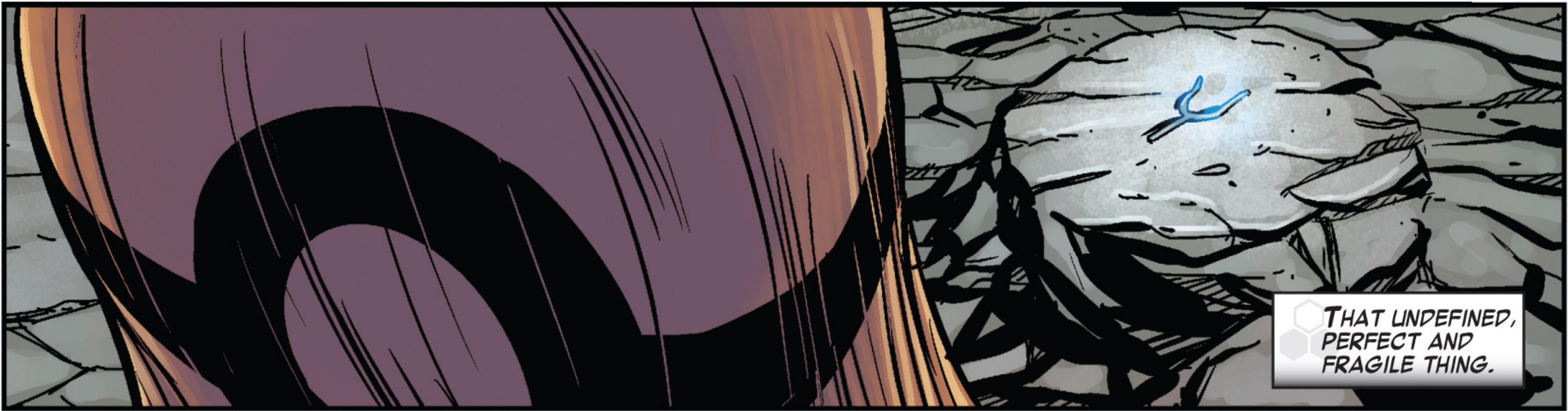
GET TO CLASS--DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.

I WOULDN'T WANT TO RUIN IT FOR YOU.

BECAUSE WHO WOULD DO A THING LIKE THAT?



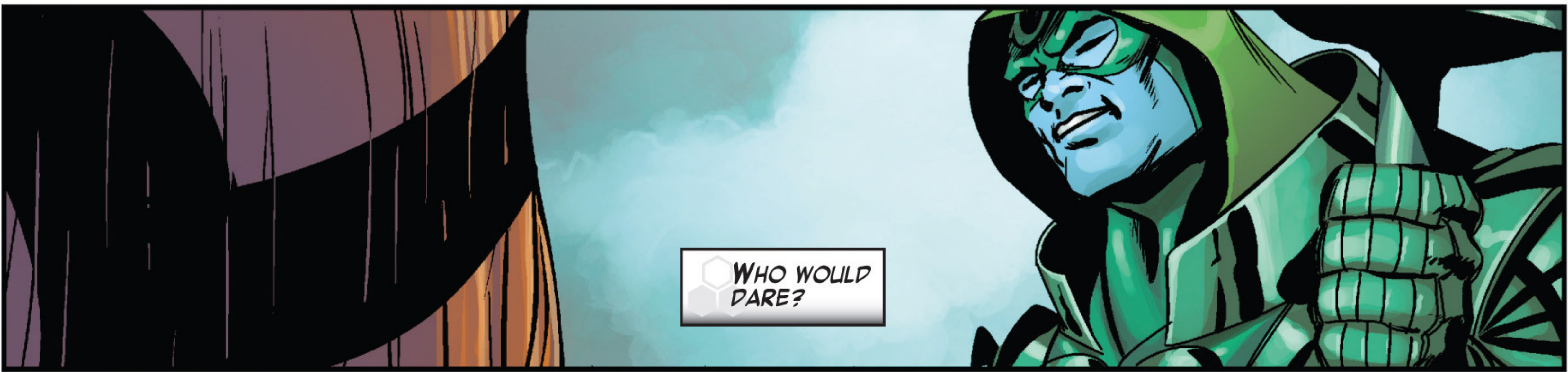
WHO WOULD
RUIN LOVE?



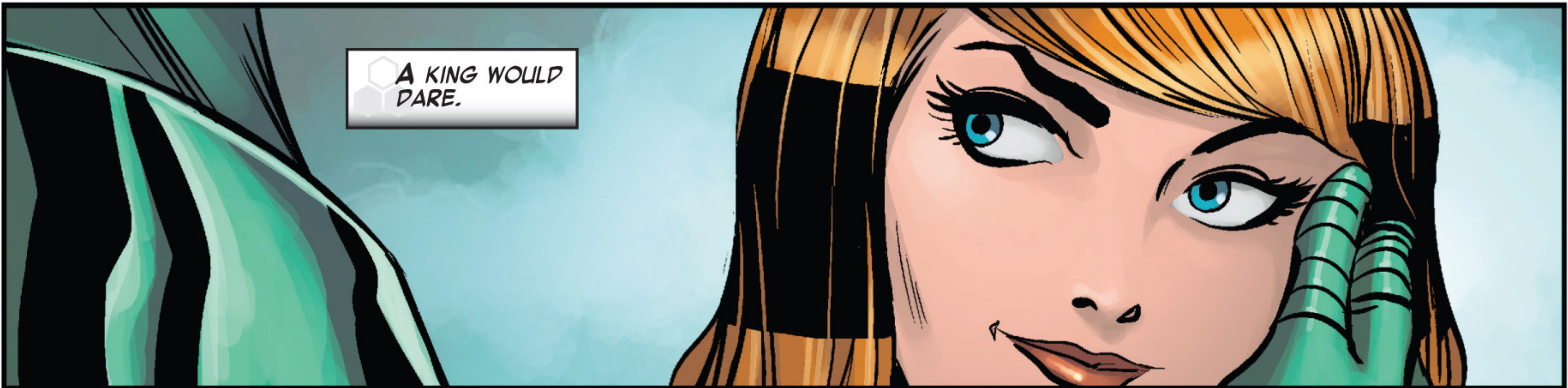
THAT UNDEFINED,
PERFECT AND
FRAGILE THING.



THE ONLY MYSTERY
LEFT IN THE UNIVERSE.



WHO WOULD
DARE?



A KING WOULD
DARE.



SISTER!

FWASHH

YOUR KING HAS
SUMMONED YOU
HOME.



FANTASTIC FAN PAGE 4

It seems like FANTASTIC FOUR #604 and FF #16, the conclusion to our long-running Celestials saga, evoked some strong emotional reactions in our otherwise-stoic readership!

Dear FF Creative Crew,

I just finished reading issue #604. I have not written fan mail to the FF since I was a kid, but after 25 years of sticking with the First Family, I once again feel it deserves the time and the recognition it's getting under Jonathan Hickman's direction. It's not typical to read a comic book with a lump in your throat and a strong sense that you should call your family and talk for a while. But in the midst of the cosmic moments in this issue, the family aspect at the heart of the FF kept coming through and I finished the story feeling like I should call my dad. Thanks for the huge moments in this issue: "To me my Galactus!" is a legendary Marvel scene that gives Franklin his due. Most of all, thanks for a story that spanned such a wide array of timelines and events without ever losing the family foundation of the team. You've proven that these elements can coexist and succeed.

Rick McGee
Richmond, KY.

4444

Damn you, Hickman, Epting, Magyar, Mounts & company.

FANTASTIC FOUR #604 is a beautiful, moving, exciting, profound piece of comic literature. This single issue has to be held as an example of what "funny books" can (and should) do.

And when Future Franklin returns in triumph, held in the palm of his Herald, Galactus, and receives the loving embrace of his father; I will not lie, my eyes welled up and my heart soared.

A comic book brought me to tears.

Damn you all...and don't ever stop making moments like that happen again and again.

Kristopher Koller
Newbury Park, CA

4444

Dear FANTASTIC FOUR and FF Creative Geniuses!

All I can say is wow. In my 27 years of reading comics, this is the very first letter I have ever written. FANTASTIC FOUR was always my favorite comic book, ever since I was 6 and my mom bought me a stack of FFs to read while I was sick in bed.

But since Jonathan Hickman started penning it, the level of storytelling was taken to a whole new level. The broad story woven and carried brought flawlessly adding more nuance and layer after layer leaves me anxiously anticipating the next issue.

Then you give us #604 and a bookend finish to a truly EPIC story. I wept. I brought the comic out during my lunch break, got to the end and wept openly, in public.

Thank you for returning joy and wonder to the comic book reading experience.

Sincerely,
Eric Batista-Rogell
Los Angeles, CA

PS I called my mom and thanked her for introducing me to comics shortly after I stopped sobbing.

4444

Dear Mr. Hickman,

First I would like to tell you that I think that you are doing a stupendous job on this title. I, being 13 myself, appreciate the fact that the stories are kid-friendly.

Second, I would like to ask if this is no-prize worthy. On the cover of FANTASTIC FOUR #3, Jack Kirby drew the Torch with two left hands. Now, I realize that this was fifty years ago, but I hope this will get me a No-Prize. I have wanted one my whole life. Also what are the chances of Stan Lee writing an Annual or Special sometime?

Nick Whitaker
Mt. Vernon, Mo

Great to hear from you, Nick! But a mistake on a Stan and Jack cover? That doesn't seem possible, does it? Let's take a look!



Well, will you look at that? Nick, it seems to me that, fifty years old or not, you've earned yourself a genuine fifteen-carat No-Prize!



As for Stan coming back to write another FF story at some point, "El Hombre" is notoriously busy, but we'd never rule it out! On the other hand, after that flub with FF #3, we're not sure we ought to let him back in the place!

Hello, Curators of the Fantastic --

I can appreciate that Franklin and Valeria Richards are the offspring of one of the smartest men on the planet. And I can accept that Valeria

herself is right up there I.Q.-wise with her dad. But for shame! How could they have played that game of chess (on the cover of FF #16) with the chessboard set up incorrectly?

Perhaps what we're seeing is Franklin using his vast psionic abilities to switch the dark and light squares on the chessboard while simultaneously distracting Valeria with his parlor tricks? Or maybe they've invented another game which uses chess pieces BUT ignores the "white to the right" rule of setting up a chessboard properly? Heck, maybe they're in the Negative Zone where all the chess pieces (and the squares of the board) are NEGATIVE!

Either way, I think I've done my due diligence and would like to relieve you of one unfolded, unstapled, un-mutilated No-Prize.

Sincerely,
Paul Horn
San Diego, CA

(Loyal monthly reader since Reed duked it out with Ivan Kragoff in a crippled space shuttle of Von Doom's design)

Proof positive that absolutely nothing has changed in the last fifty years—you can still count on Marvel for at least one bone-headed goof in every issue!



(And Stan, you can come home now, all is forgiven!)

4444

Dear FANTASTIC FOUR team,

I have just read issue #16 of FF, and I must say wow! Not only did you close out an amazing storyline, but you also got me hyped for the next one. When I finished reading, I exclaimed "This is why I read comics!" Mr. Hickman, you really outdid yourself with the writing. Same applies to the artists as well, Nick did some terrific artwork in these last two issues, but seeing Steve's artwork at the end just made me smile. Although, he is gone for the time being, I hope to see him return again one day. For Mr. Epting has brought some of the most amazing artwork to the FF, and for that I am grateful. Thank you to all who made this series possible.

Looking forward to the next issue,
Sergio Garcia
Tracy, CA

Glad you've been enjoying it, Sergio! And we'll be announcing Steve Epting's exciting new assignment any time now—keep watching the skies for it!

Tom B
6/18/12

As always, if you've got an opinion to share, you can e-mail it to us at MHEROES@MARVEL.COM. Be sure to mark your letters as "Okay To Print!" if you'd like to see them featured here on the Fan Page!

HICKMAN • DRAGOTTA • PETER



MARVEL

21

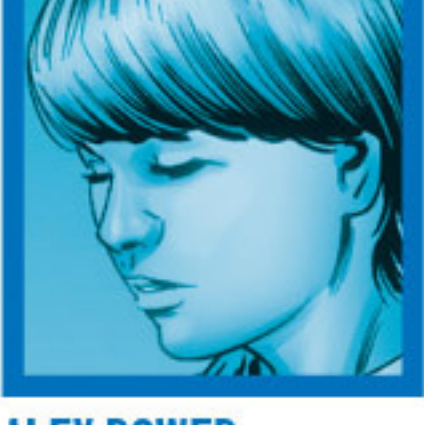
WITH THE AID OF THE ELITE INHUMAN LIGHT BRIGADE, JOHNNY STORM SURVIVED THE PERILS OF THE NEGATIVE ZONE. THE RESURRECTED KREE SUPREME INTELLIGENCE FORESAW HIS OWN DEMISE AT THE HANDS OF THE SILENT INHUMAN KING BLACK BOLT. FRANKLIN'S FUTURE INCARNATION GAVE PAUSE TO THE BATTLE BY GIVING BLACK BOLT A HINT OF WHAT IS TO COME IN THE FUTURE . RONAN THE KREE ACCUSER AND HIS WIFE, CRYSTAL OF THE INHUMANS, WERE SUMMONED TO APPEAR BEFORE THE LEADERS OF THEIR RESPECTIVE PEOPLE.



REED RICHARDS
MISTER FANTASTIC



BENJAMIN GRIMM
THE THING



ALEX POWER



MIK, KORR & TURG



ARTIE



FUTURE FRANKLIN
RICHARDS



SUSAN RICHARDS
INVISIBLE WOMAN



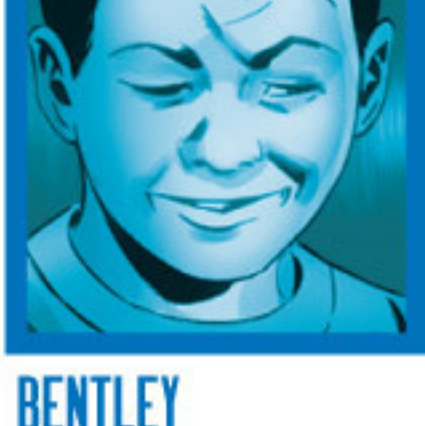
VALERIA RICHARDS



DRAGON MAN



TONG



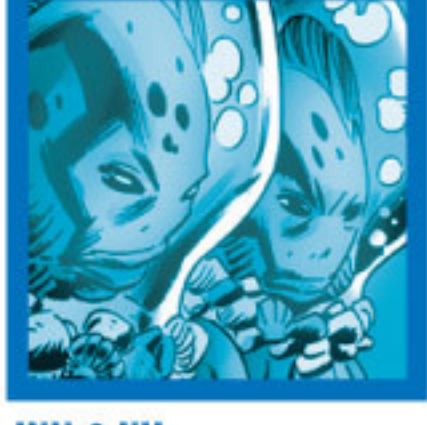
BENTLEY



JOHNNY STORM
THE HUMAN TORCH



FRANKLIN RICHARDS



WU & VIL



LEECH



ONOME

WRITER: JONATHAN HICKMAN

ARTIST: NICK DRAGOTTA

COLOR ARTIST: CRIS PETER

LETTERER: VC's CLAYTON COWLES

COVER ARTISTS: MIKE CHOI & GURU e-FX

ASSISTANT EDITOR: JAKE THOMAS

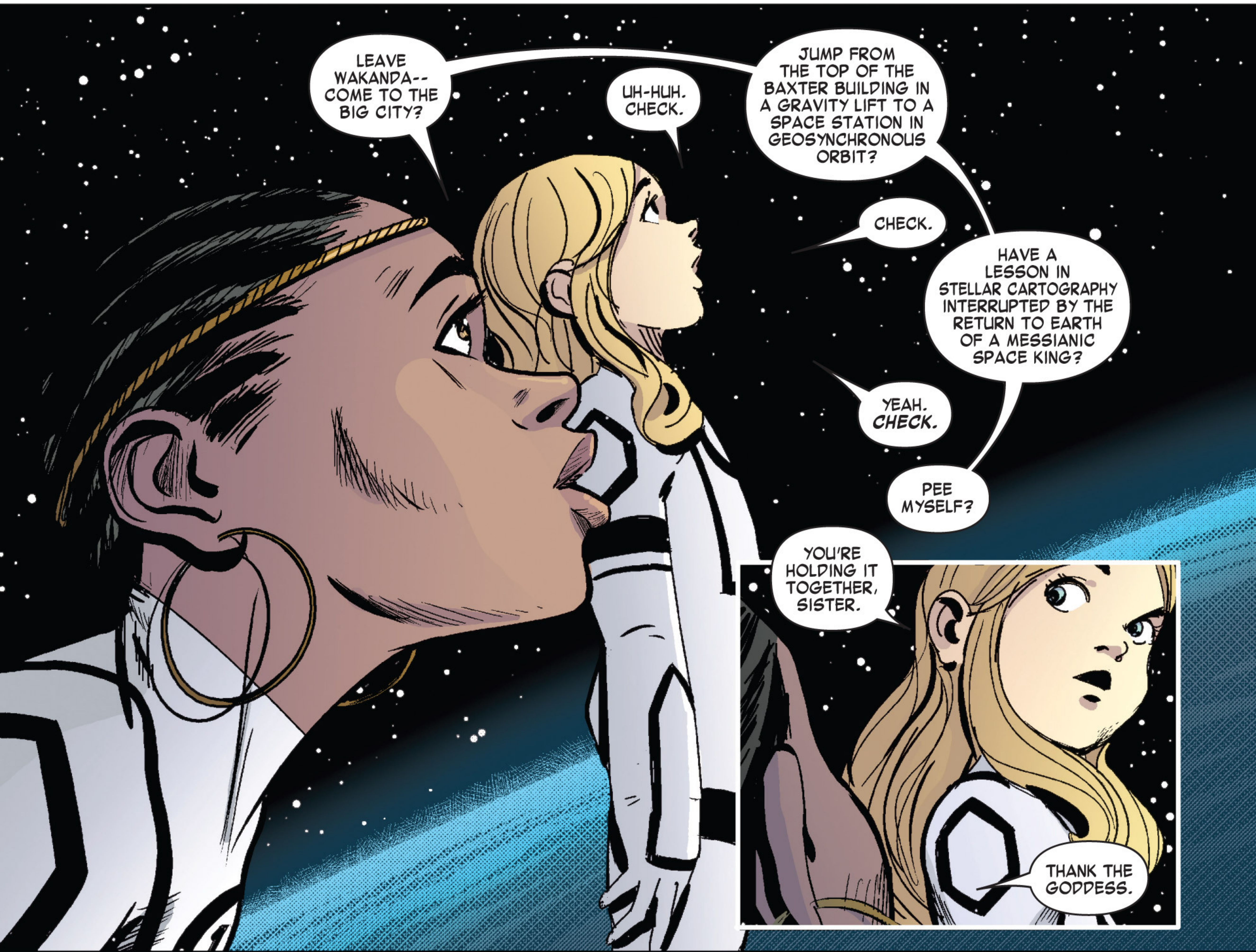
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EDITOR: TOM BREVOORT

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CHIEF CREATIVE OFFICER: JOE QUESADA
PUBLISHER: DAN BUCKLEY
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: ALAN FINE



FOUNDATION.



LEAVE
WAKANDA--
COME TO THE
BIG CITY?

UH-HUH.
CHECK.

JUMP FROM
THE TOP OF THE
BAXTER BUILDING IN
A GRAVITY LIFT TO A
SPACE STATION IN
GEOSYNCHRONOUS
ORBIT?

CHECK.

HAVE A
LESSON IN
STELLAR CARTOGRAPHY
INTERRUPTED BY THE
RETURN TO EARTH
OF A MESSIANIC
SPACE KING?

YEAH.
CHECK.

PEE
MYSELF?

YOU'RE
HOLDING IT
TOGETHER,
SISTER.

THANK THE
GODDESS.



YOU WERE EXPECTING
THIS, WEREN'T YOU,
SIR?

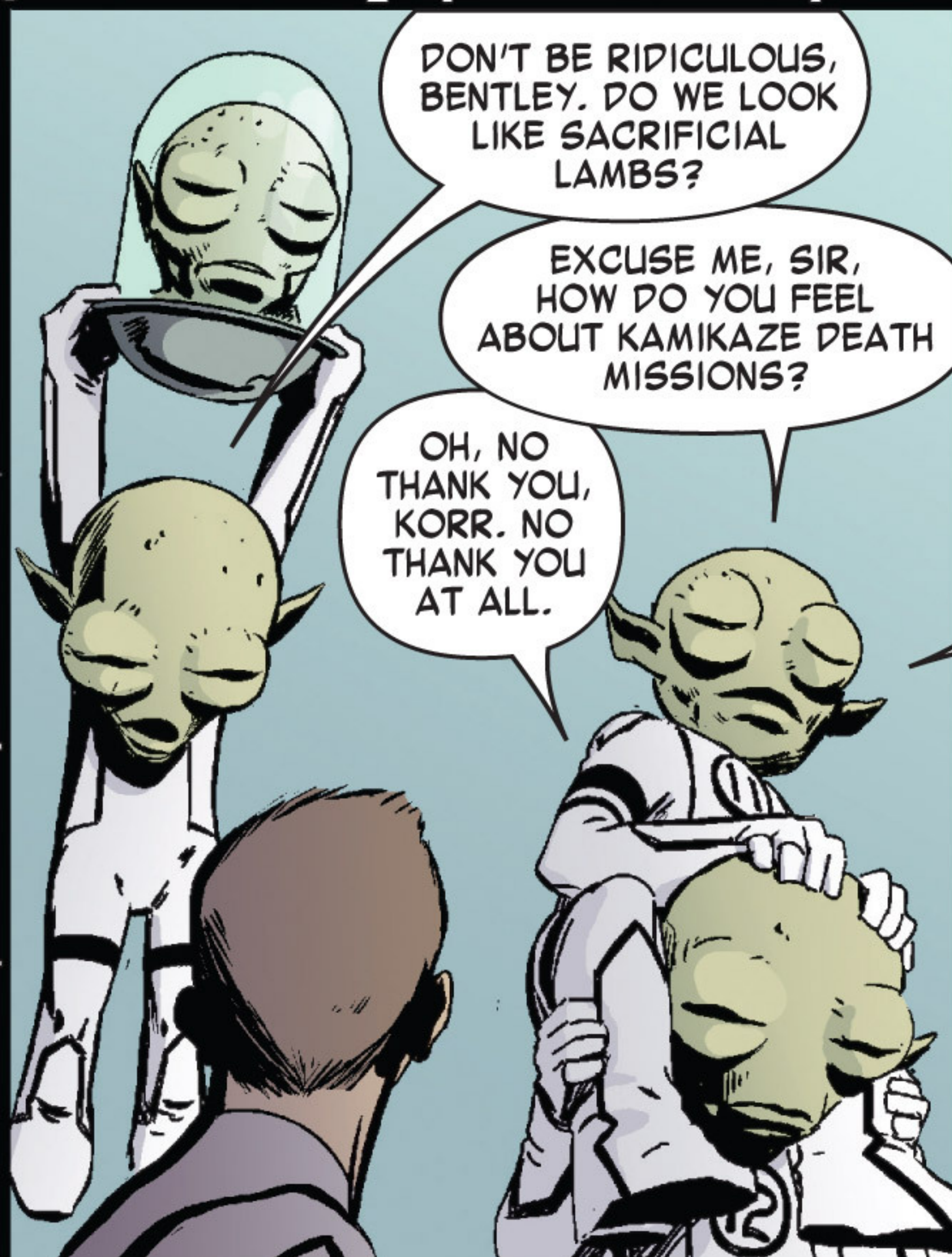
YES,
ALEX.

I WAS THERE
WHEN THE INHUMANS
DECIDED TO, ONCE
AND FOR ALL, ABANDON
THEIR CLAIM TO
HALA.

FORSAKING
THE KREE
EMPIRE.

AND
NOW THEY'RE
HERE--YOU THINK
THEY WANT TO
FIGHT?

'CAUSE WE
COULD ALWAYS
FIGHT.



DON'T BE RIDICULOUS, BENTLEY. DO WE LOOK LIKE SACRIFICIAL LAMBS?

EXCUSE ME, SIR, HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT KAMIKAZE DEATH MISSIONS?

OH, NO THANK YOU, KORR. NO THANK YOU AT ALL.

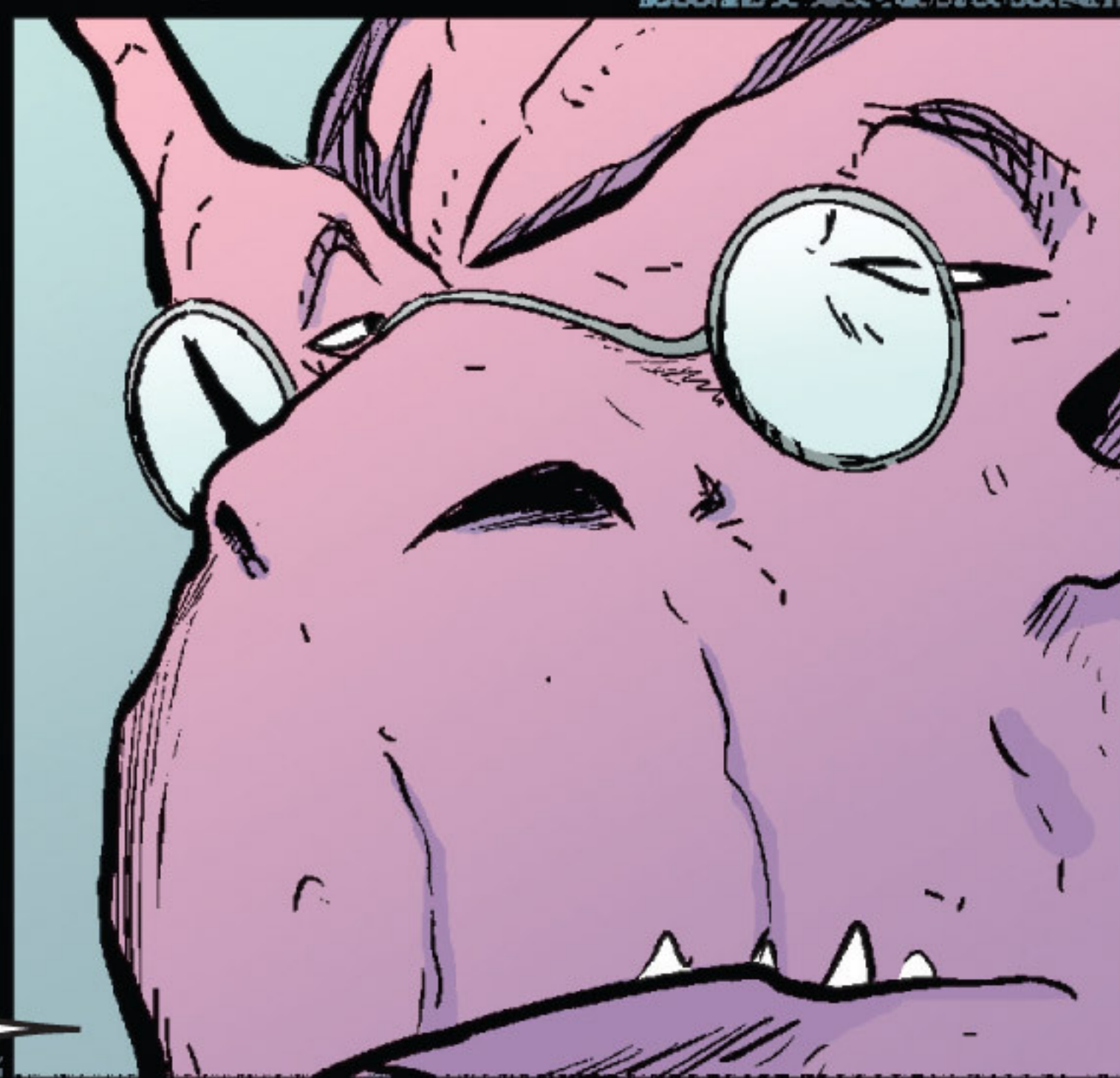
GOOD THINKING, TONG--RIGHT THINKING. YOU'RE GOING TO TURN OUT JUST FINE...YOU SHOULD CELEBRATE.

INDEED. GET ME MY HIGH-FASTENING PANTS AND A SPORTS CAR.

THIS IS NOT THE TIME FOR FOOLISHNESS.

SOME FIND SOLACE IN EMPTY HUMOR...POOR JOKES IN THE FACE OF TRUE DANGER...

BUT THE INHUMANS AND THE SUPREME INTELLIGENCE WERE AT WAR, SO THEY COULD VERY WELL BE ON THEIR WAY HERE NOW.



WE'LL NEED TO BROKER A PEACE. START A DIALOGUE...

SOMEONE BRING ME SOME HIGH-FASTENING PANTS AND A COPY OF ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER.

THERE WON'T BE A NEED FOR THAT, DRAGON.

OH?

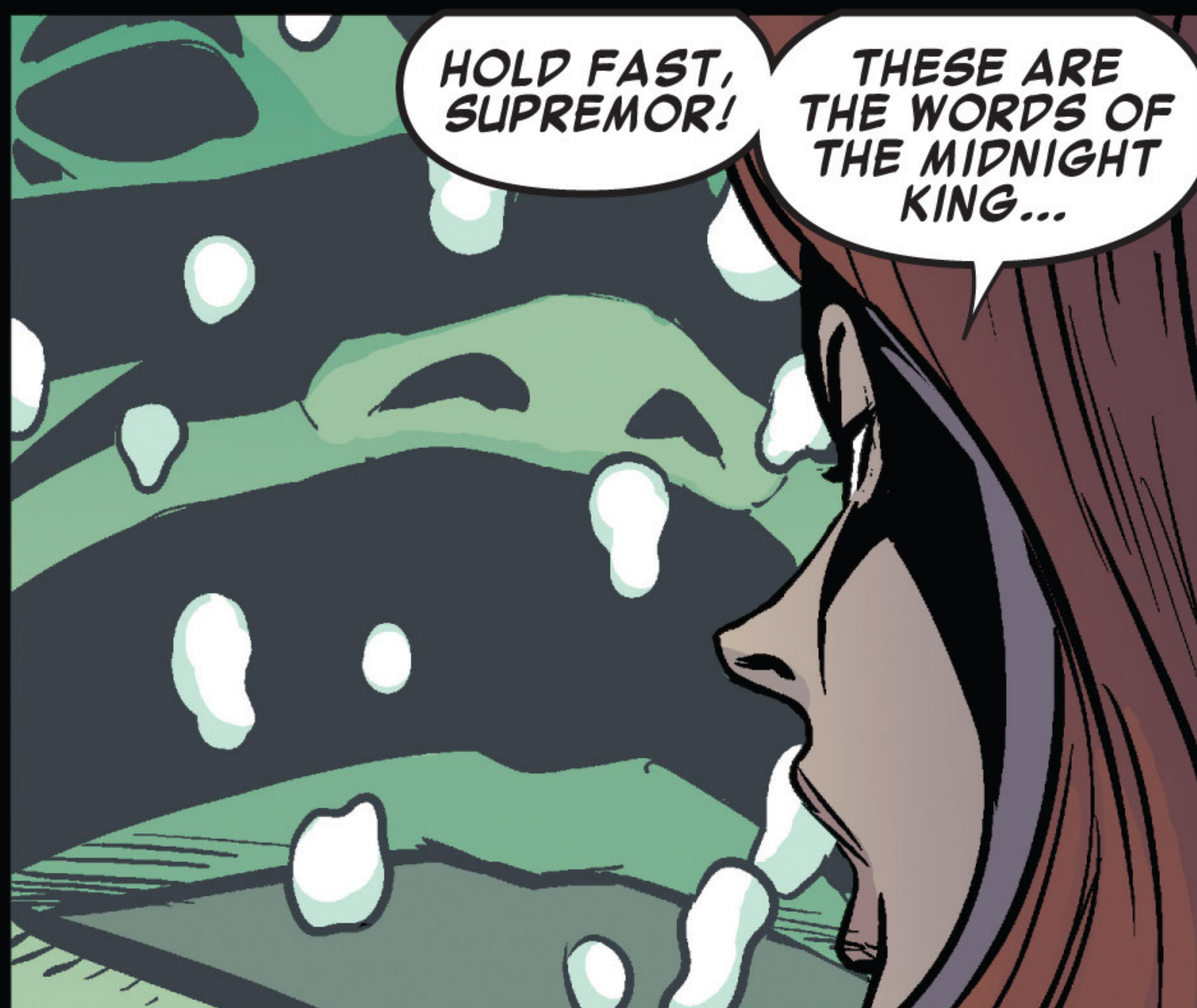
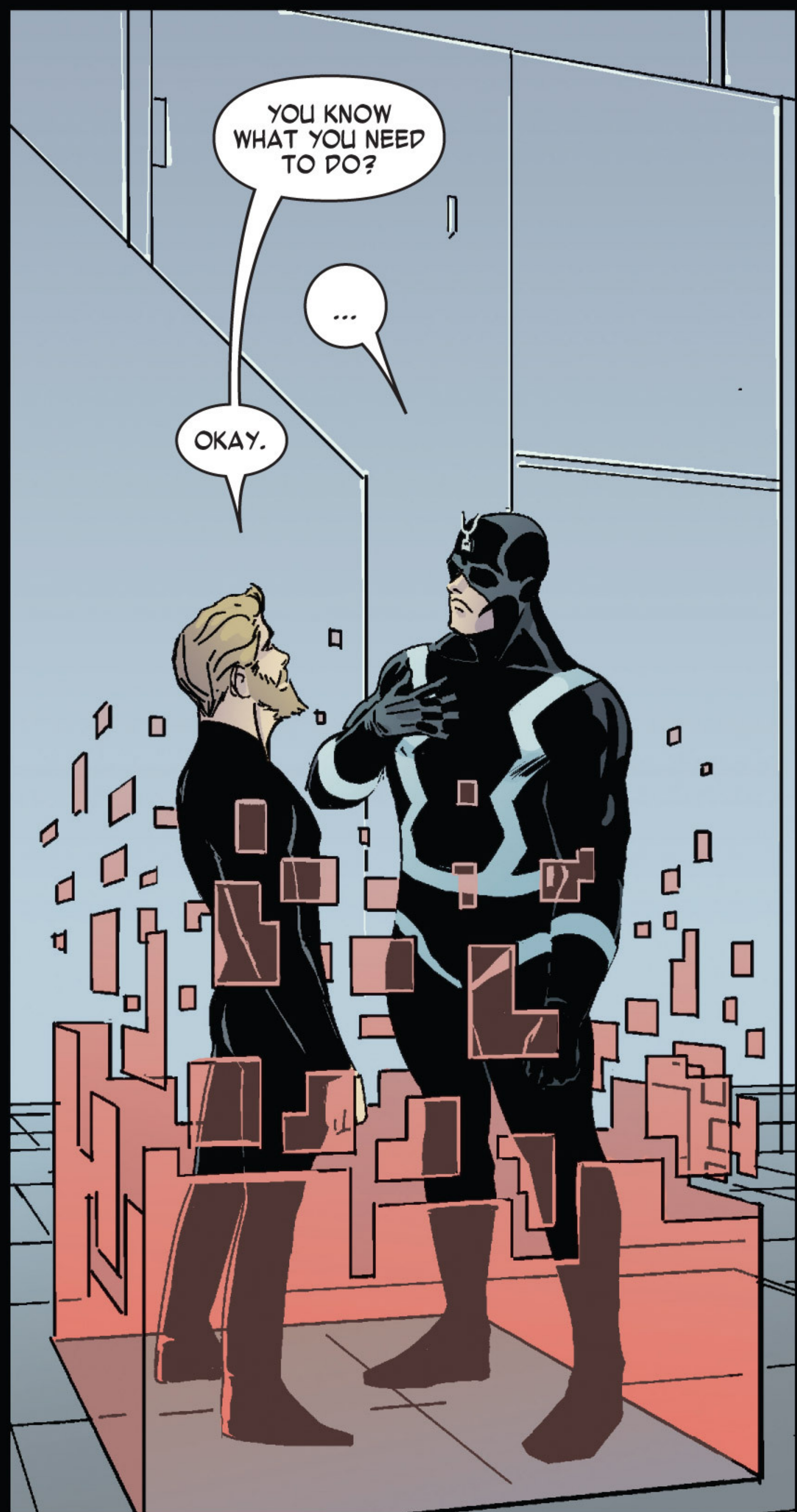
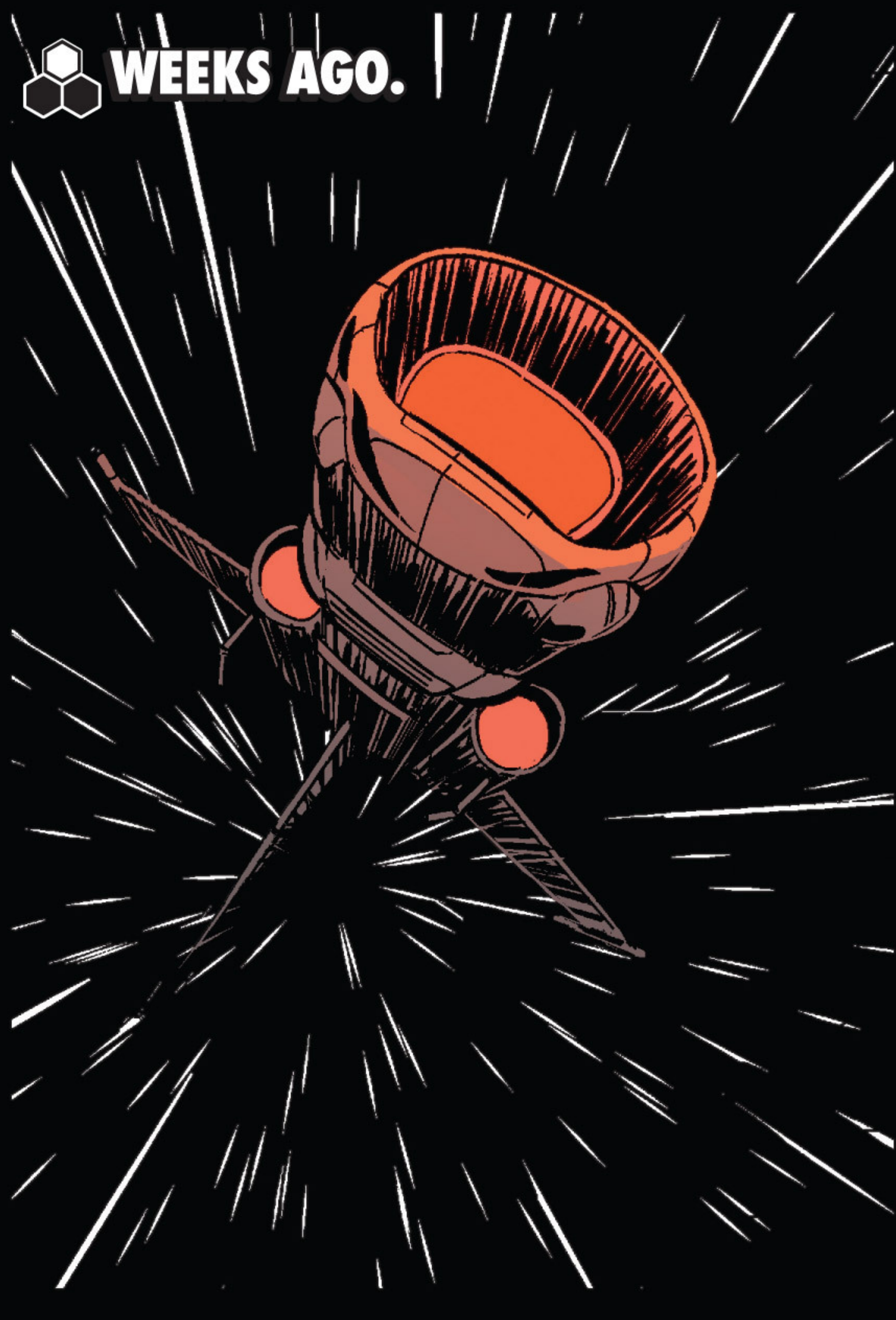
THE INHUMANS AND THE SUPREMO ARE NOW AT PEACE...

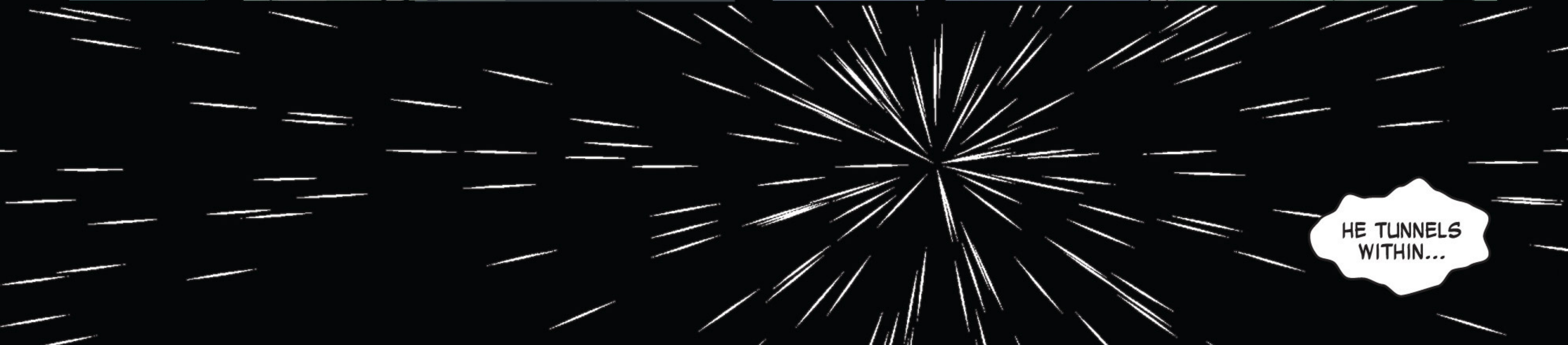


THEY MADE A DEAL.



WEEKS AGO.







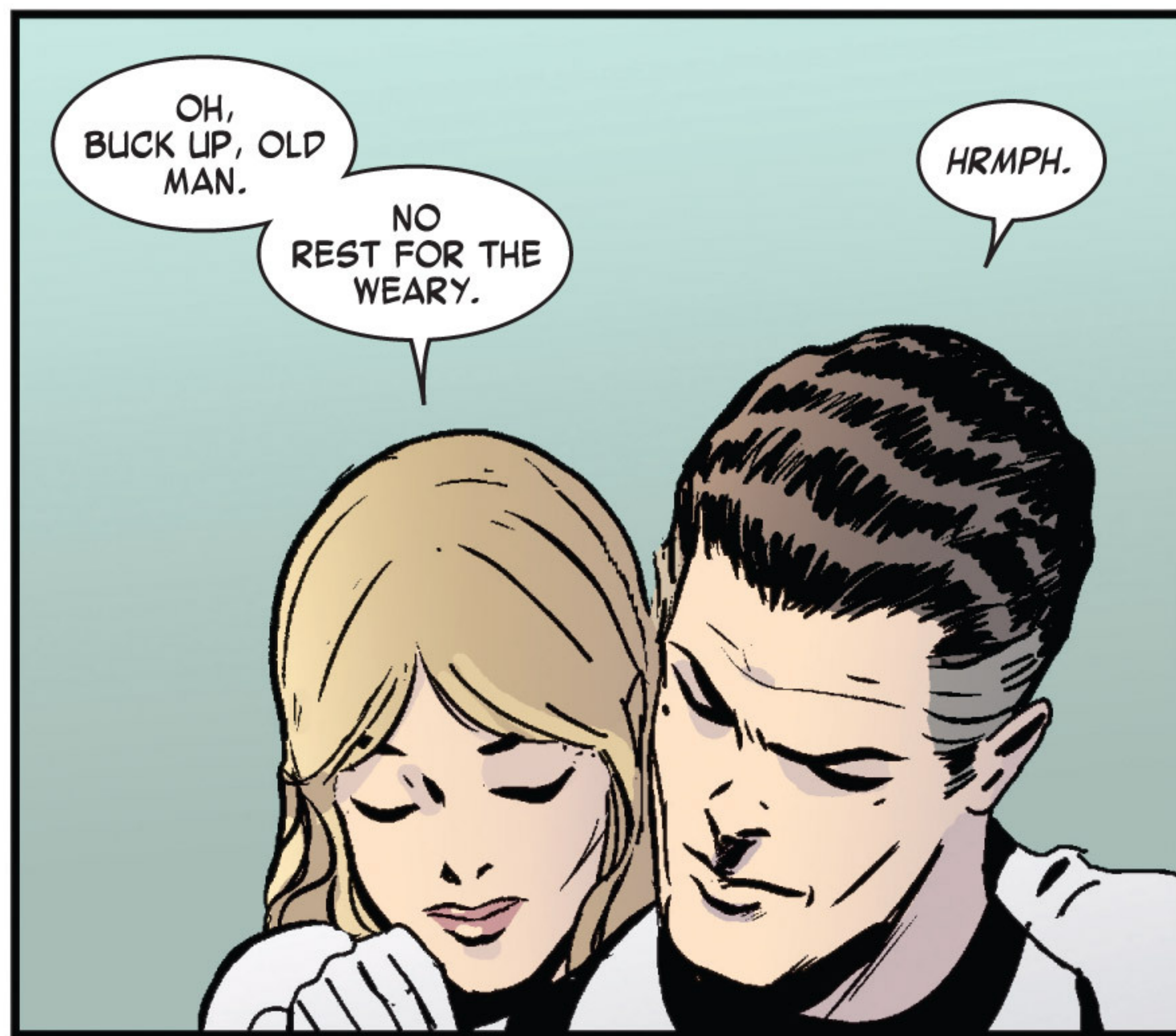
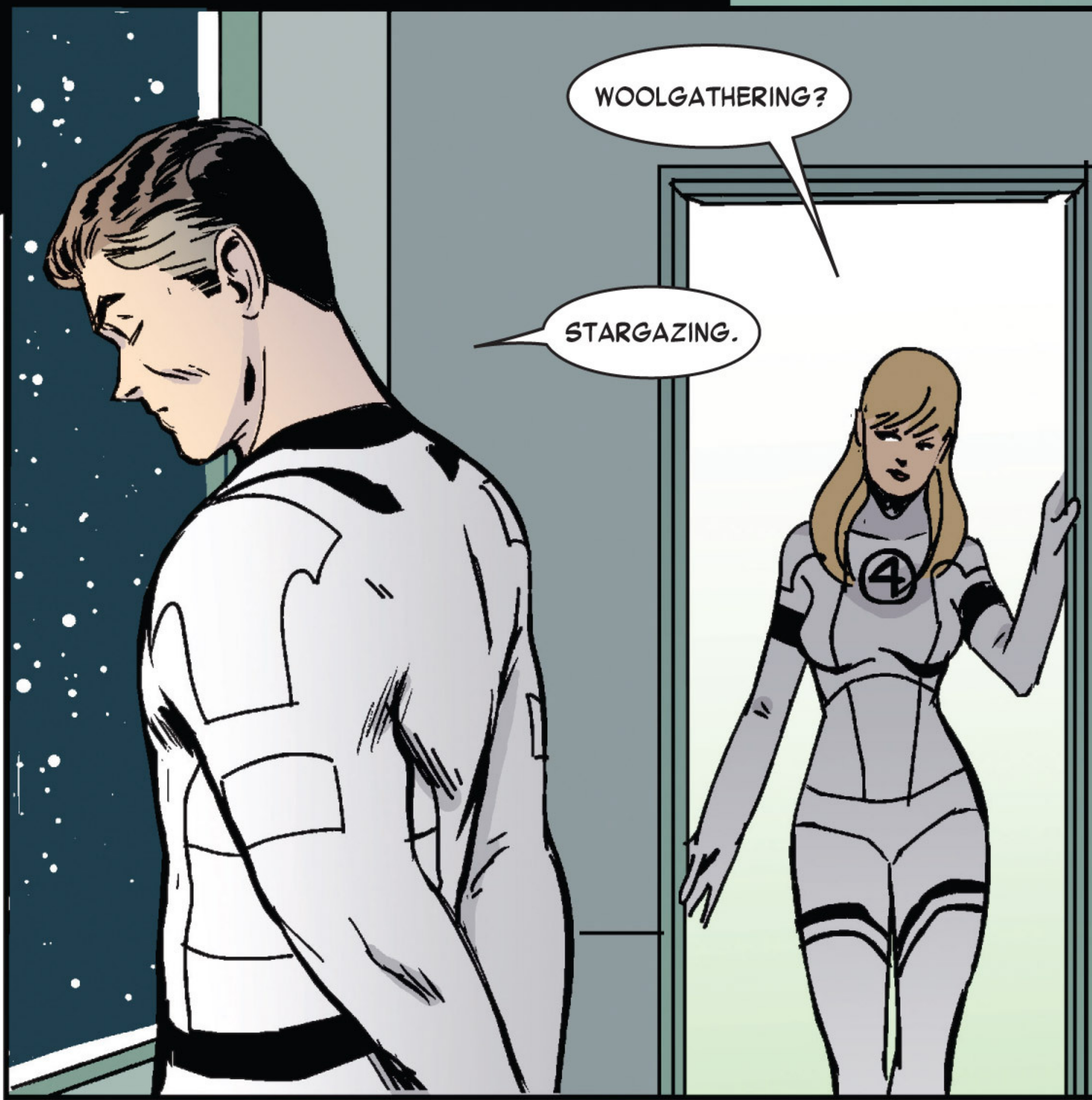
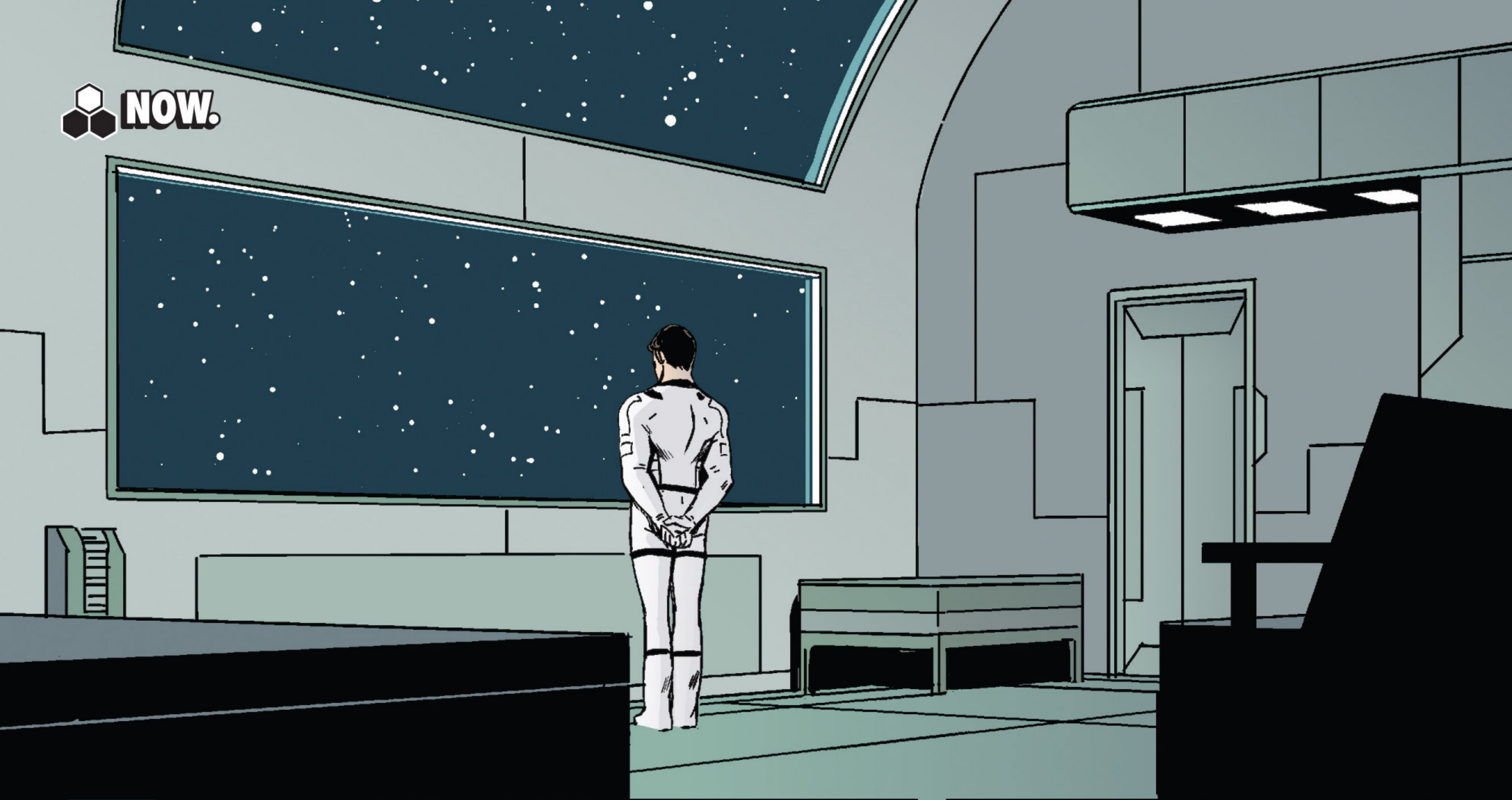
LOOK
UP, INHUMAN
KING.

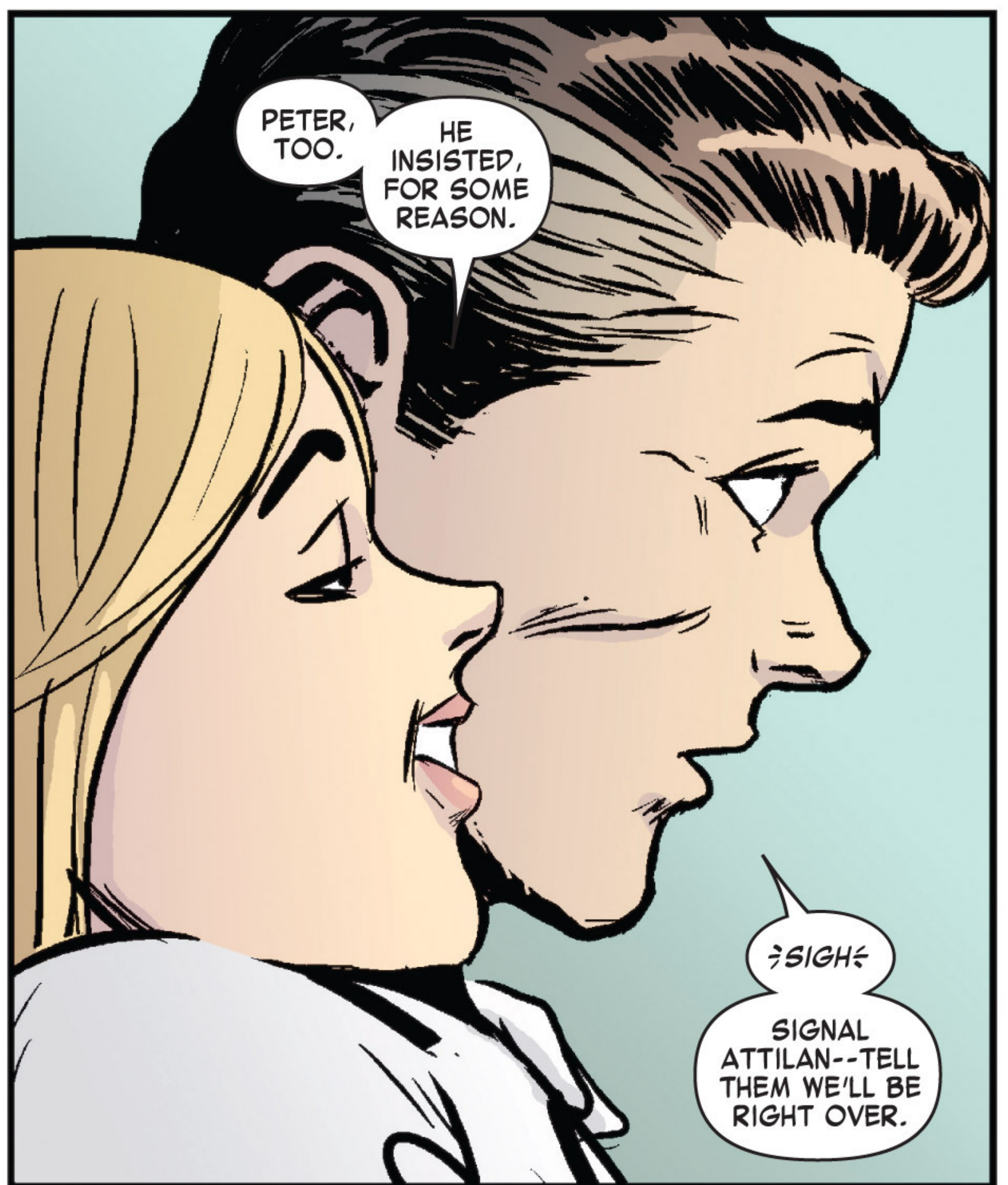
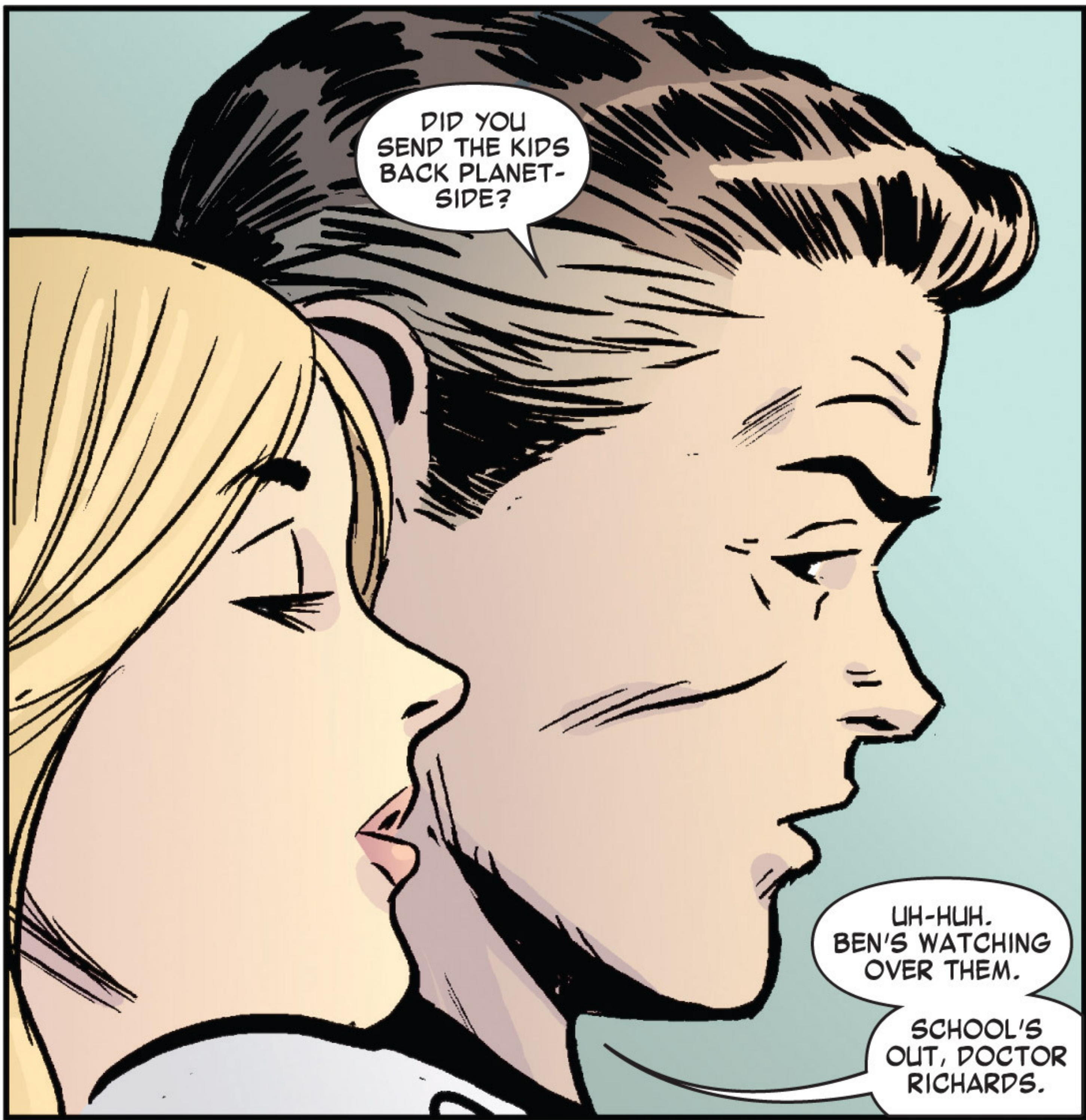
THIS IS
THE END OF
PROPHECY.

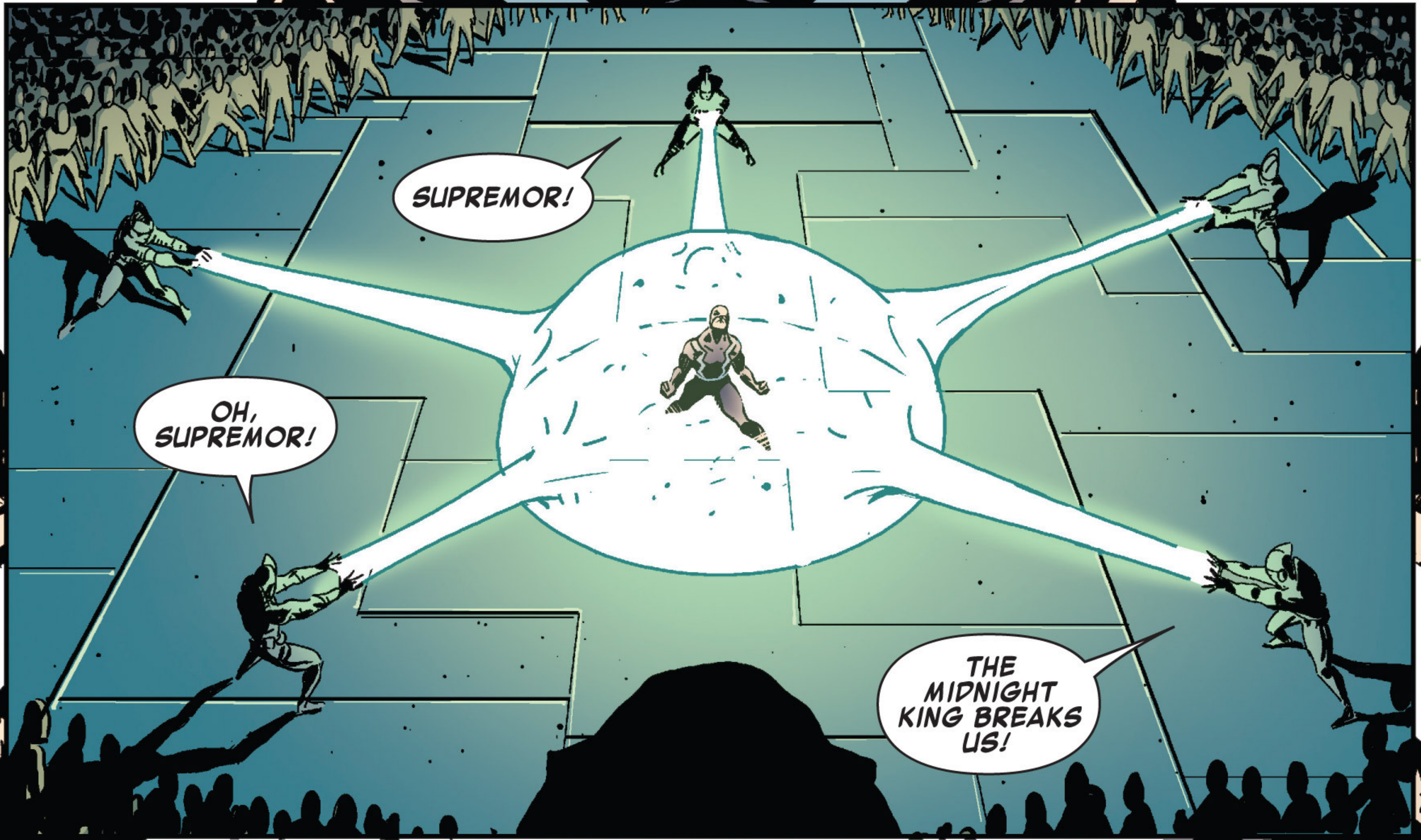
HERE IS
WHERE YOUR
OBSCENITY
ENDS.

HERE,
BEFORE THE
MULTITUDE...

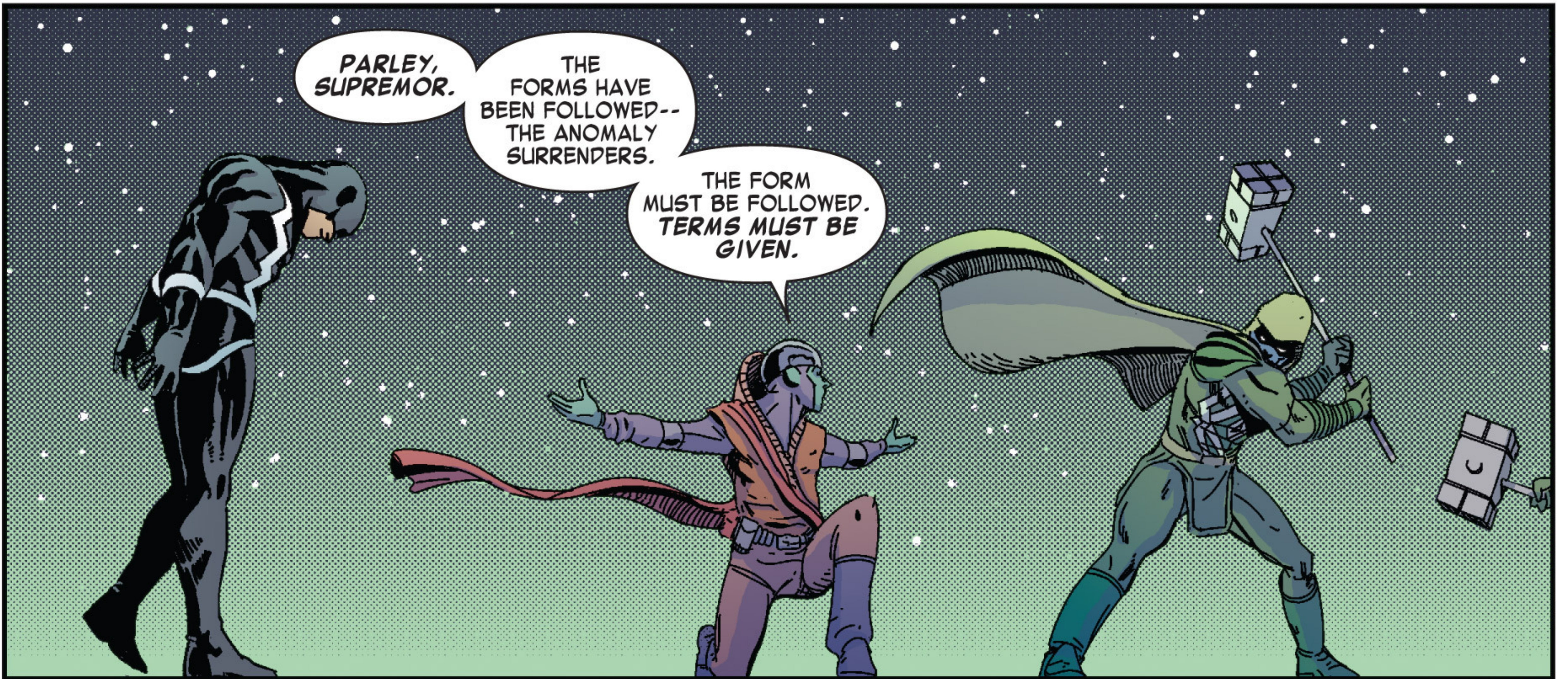
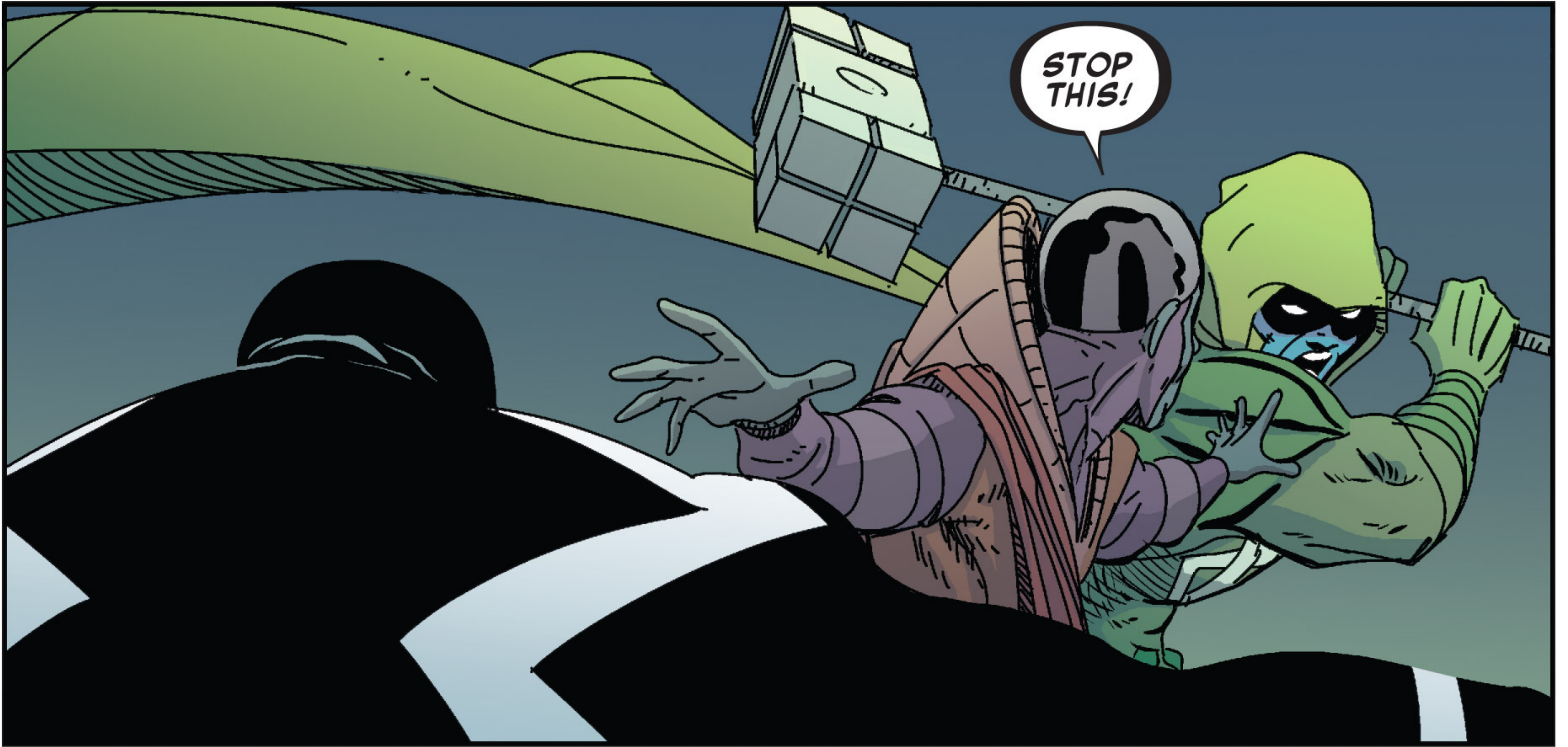
WE ARE
KREE.





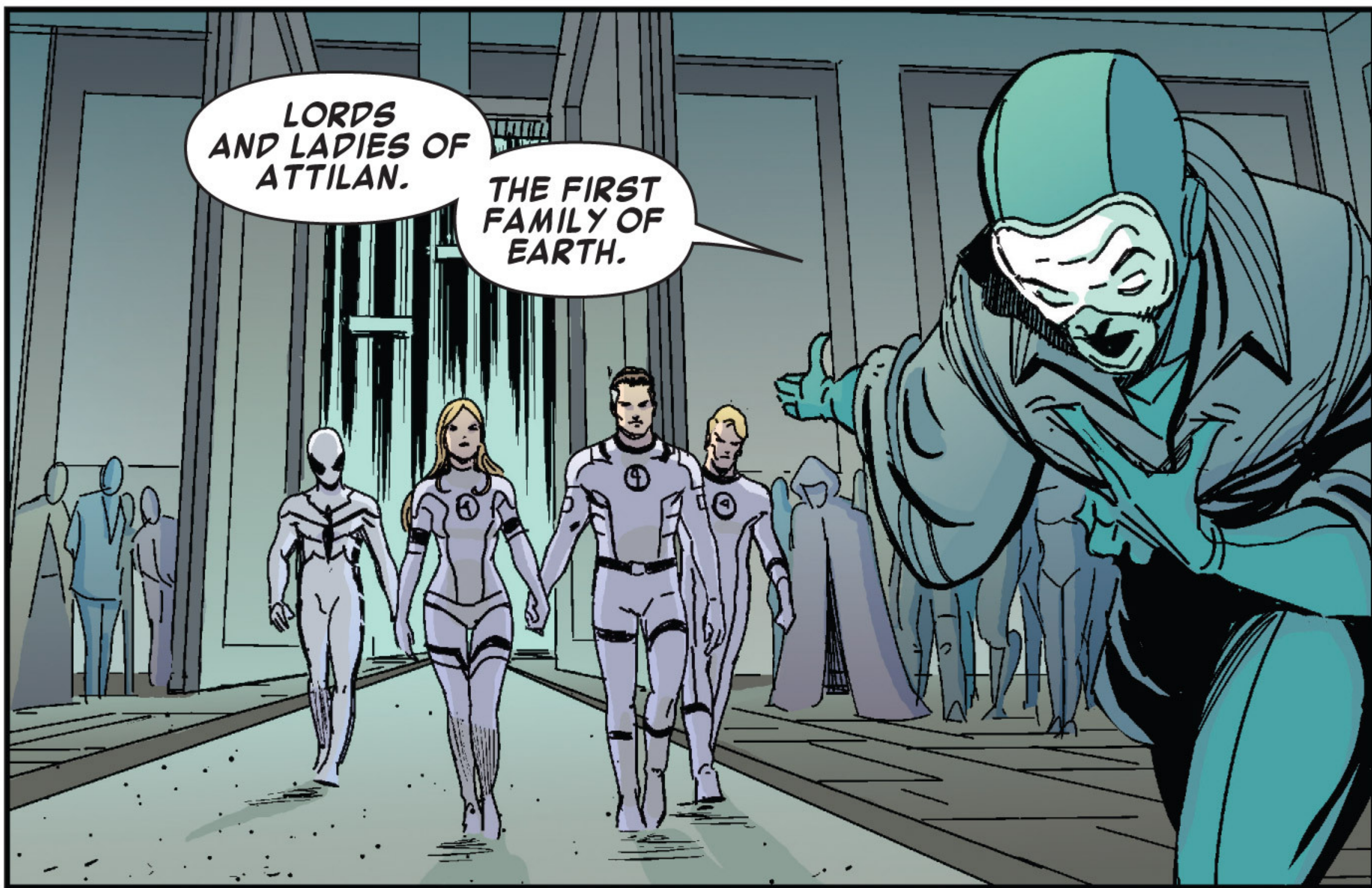






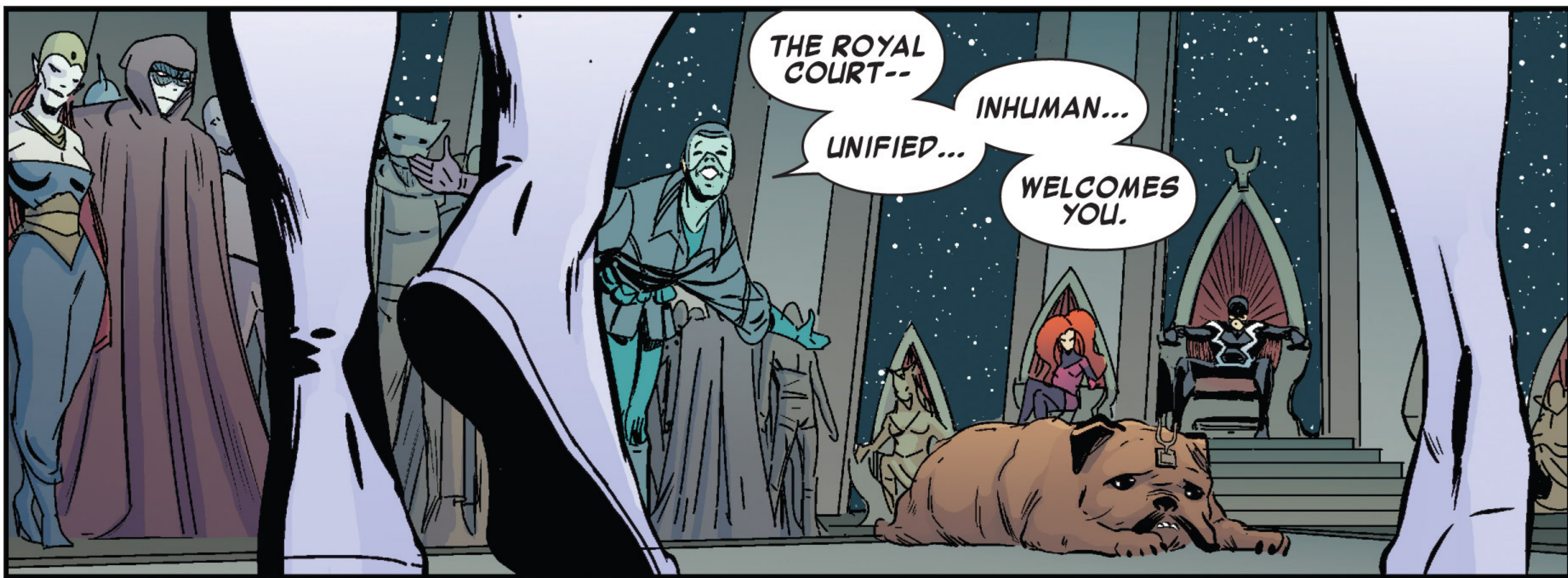


ATTILAN.
NOW.



LORDS
AND LADIES OF
ATTILAN.

THE FIRST
FAMILY OF
EARTH.



THE ROYAL
COURT--

INHUMAN...

UNIFIED...

WELCOMES
YOU.



HEEYYY.
LOOK AT THIS,
SPIDEY.

JOHNNY!

IT'S OKAY,
SUSAN.

WE'LL CATCH
UP WITH YOU GUYS
IN A MINUTE.

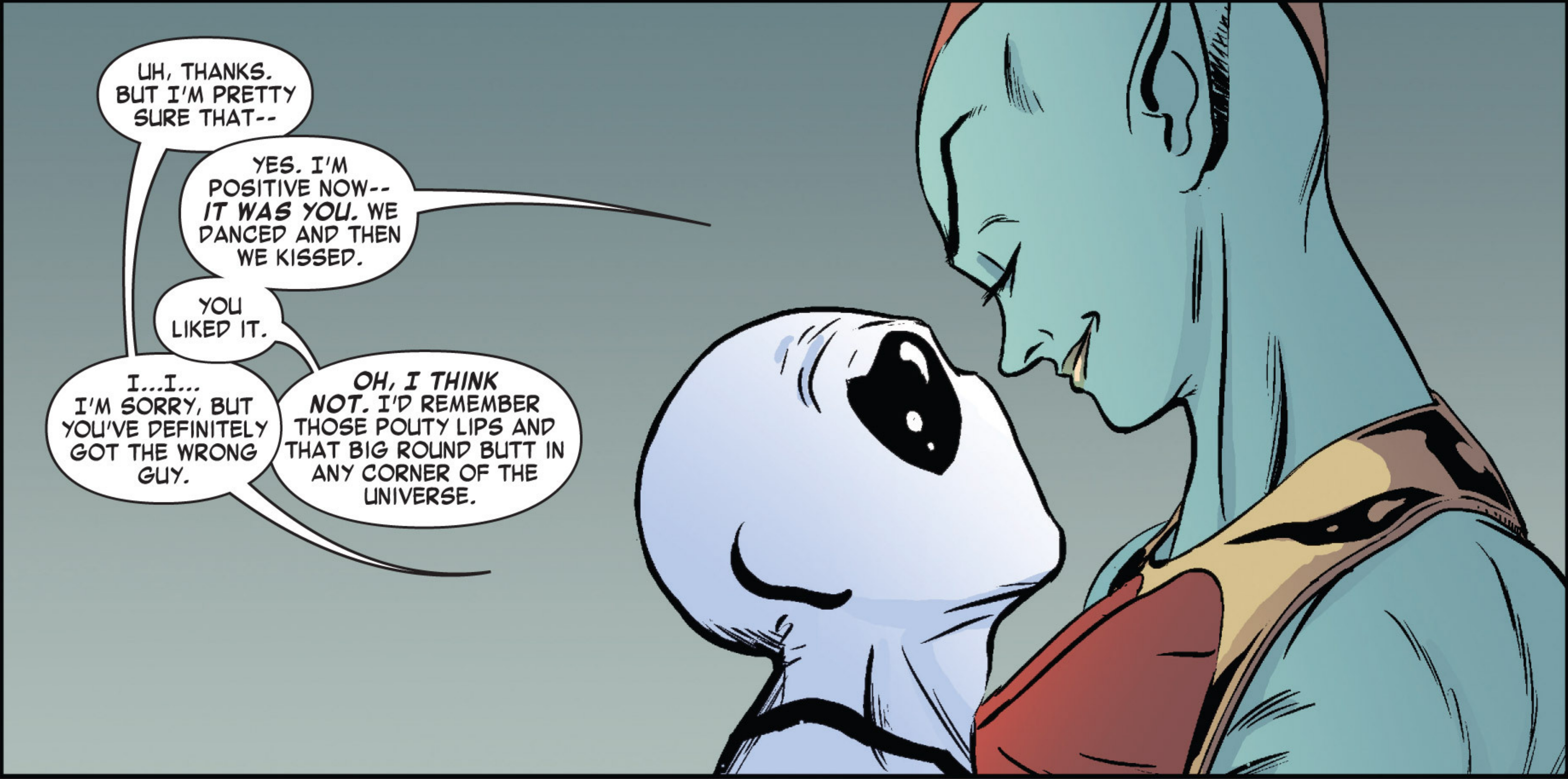


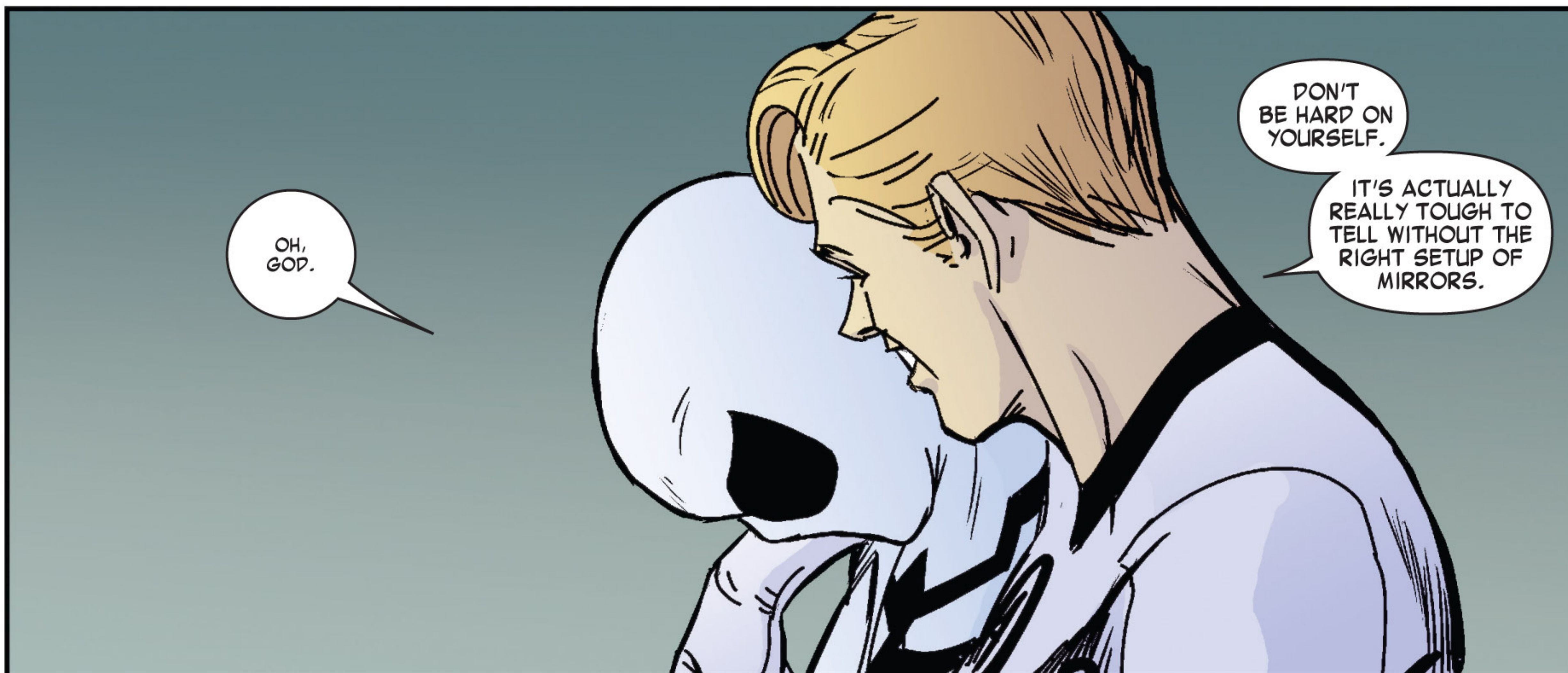
KAL!

HEH! WELL MET,
BROTHER.

YOU KEEPING
THESE GUYS UNDER
CONTROL NOW THAT
YOU'RE BACK IN THE
CIVILIZED WORLD?

JOHN
OF THE STORM...
ALWAYS ASKING THE
IMPOSSIBLE.





OH,
GOD.

DON'T
BE HARD ON
YOURSELF.

IT'S ACTUALLY
REALLY TOUGH TO
TELL WITHOUT THE
RIGHT SETUP OF
MIRRORS.



WELL...WE'RE
HERE.
WHAT CAN
WE HELP YOU
WITH, BLACK
BOLT?



IT'S THE
BARGAIN, REED
RICHARDS.
WE HAVE
ENCOUNTERED
COMPLICATIONS...



AND NOW
THAT TENUIOUS
PEACE IS IN
PERIL.

 WEEKS
AGO.

HE LIES.

THE
ANOMALY
LIES.

DESTROYER.

ENDER OF
ALL GOOD AND
RIGHTEOUS
THINGS.

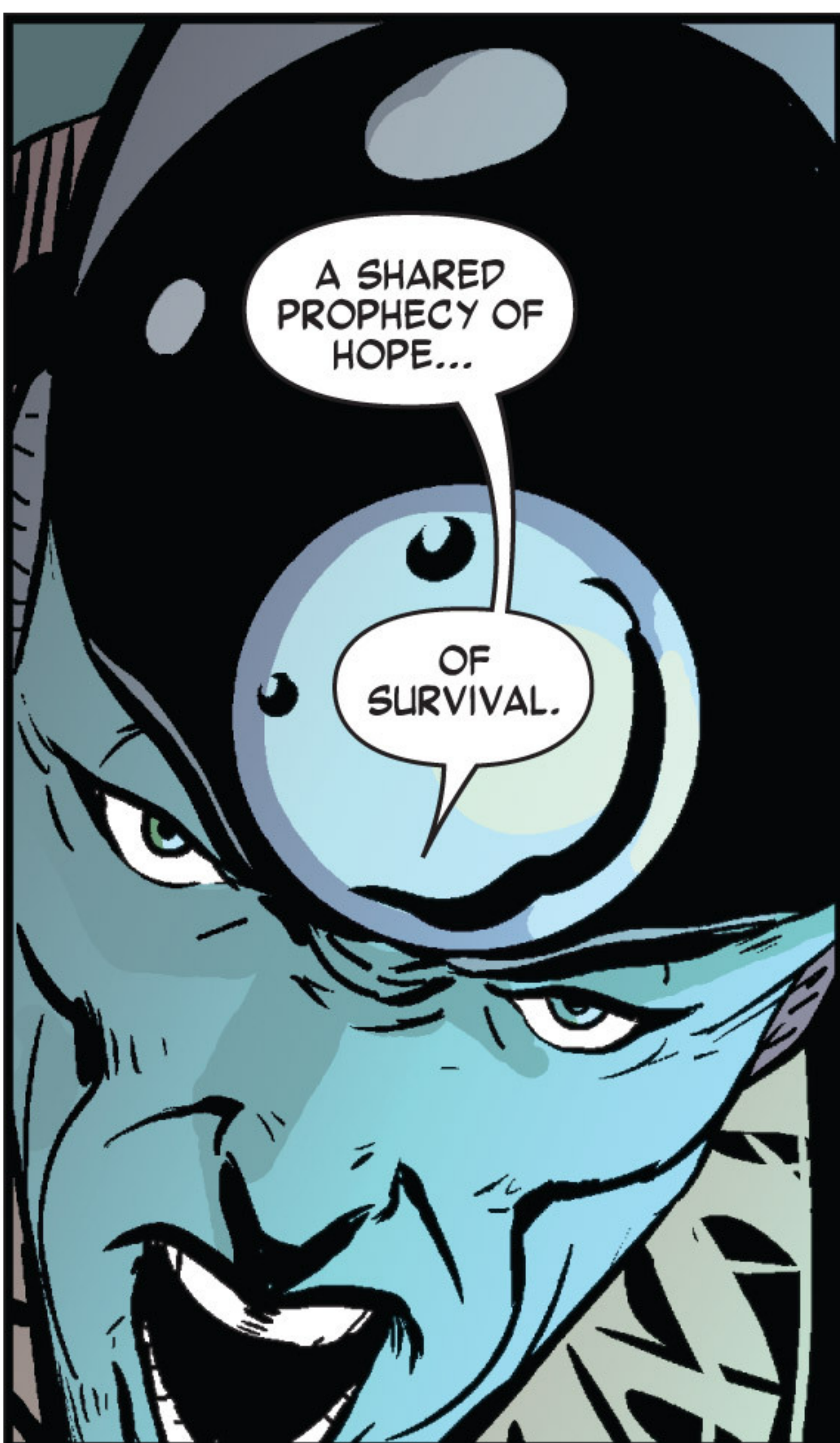
HE IS
THE END OF
US.

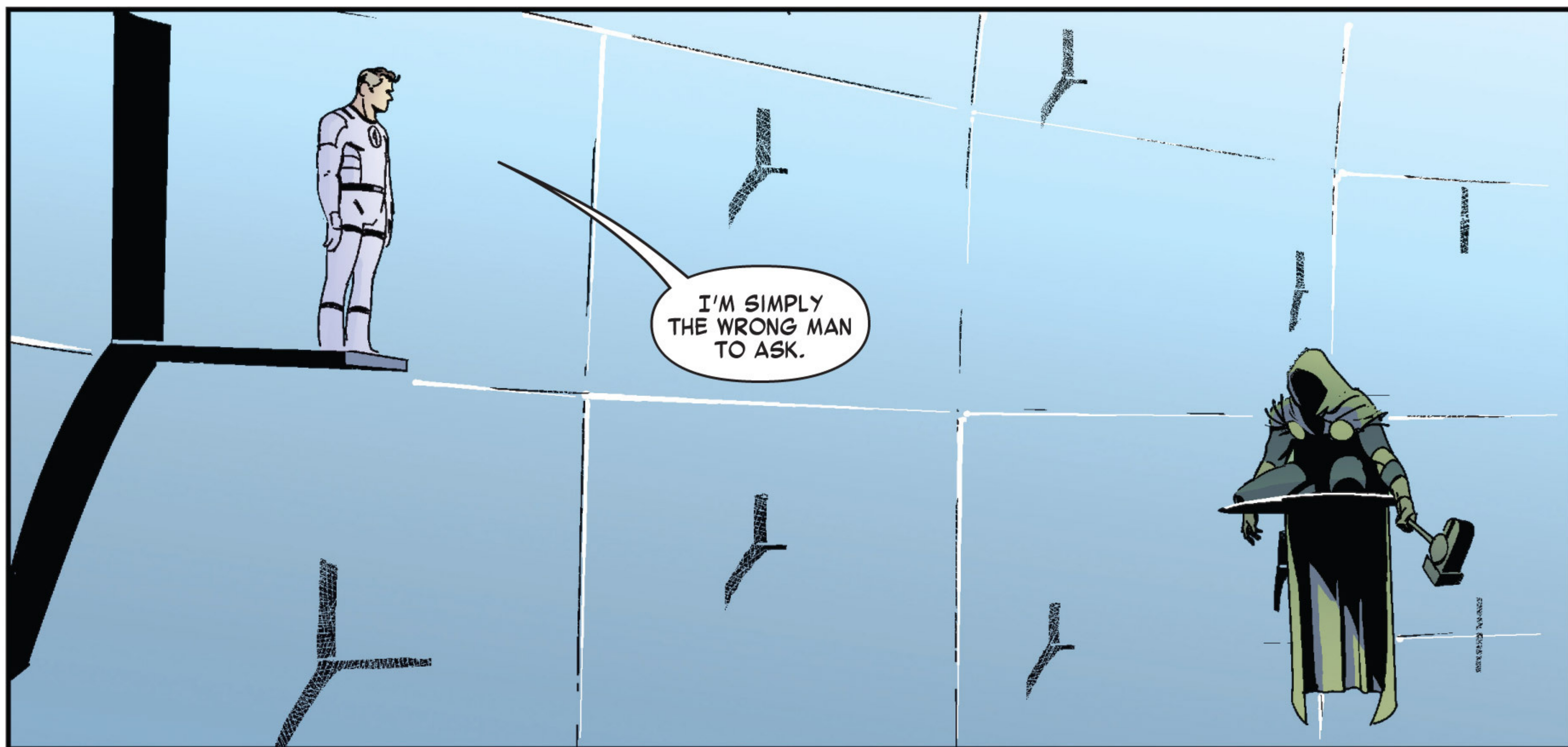
THE VERY
END.

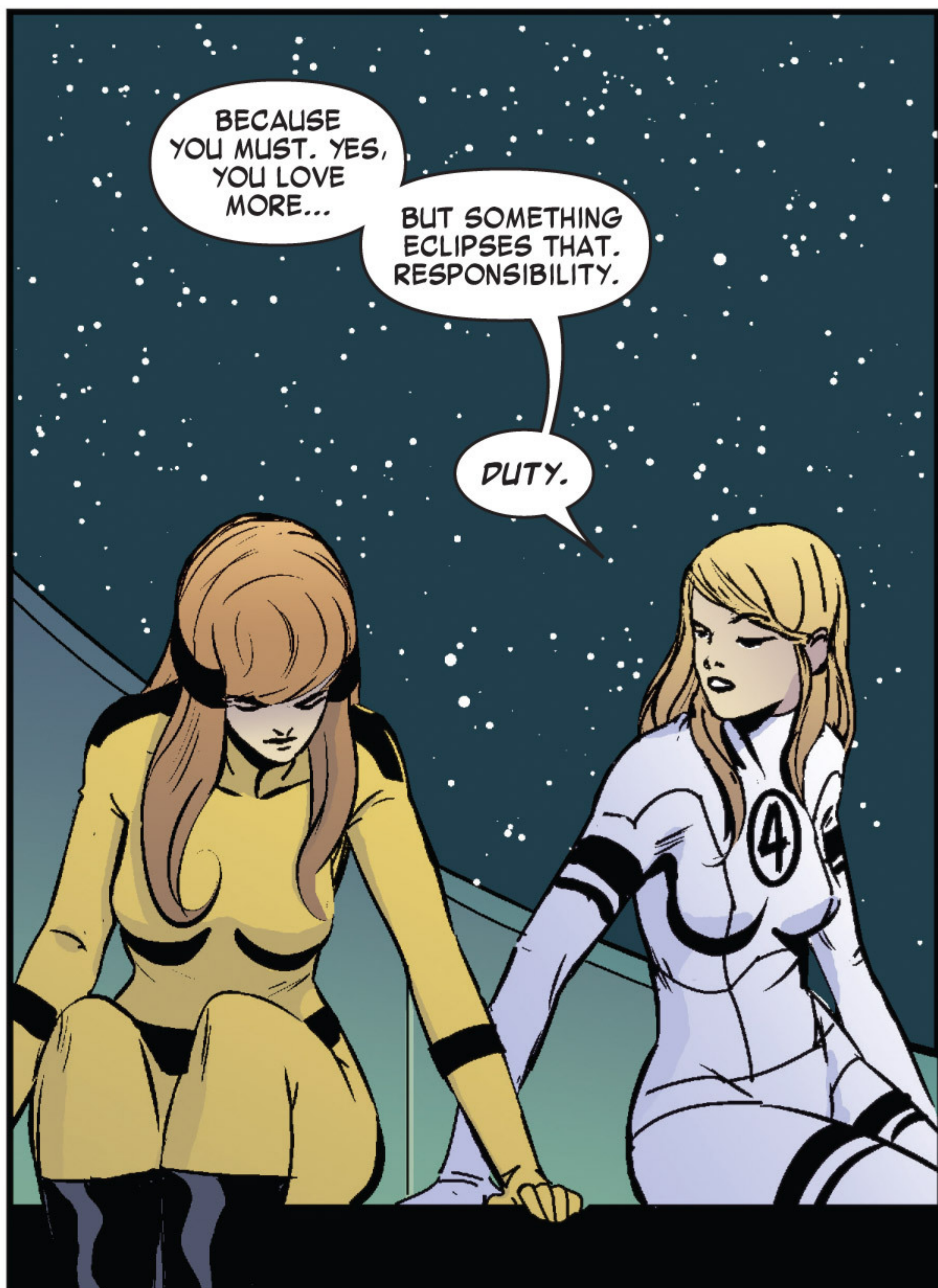
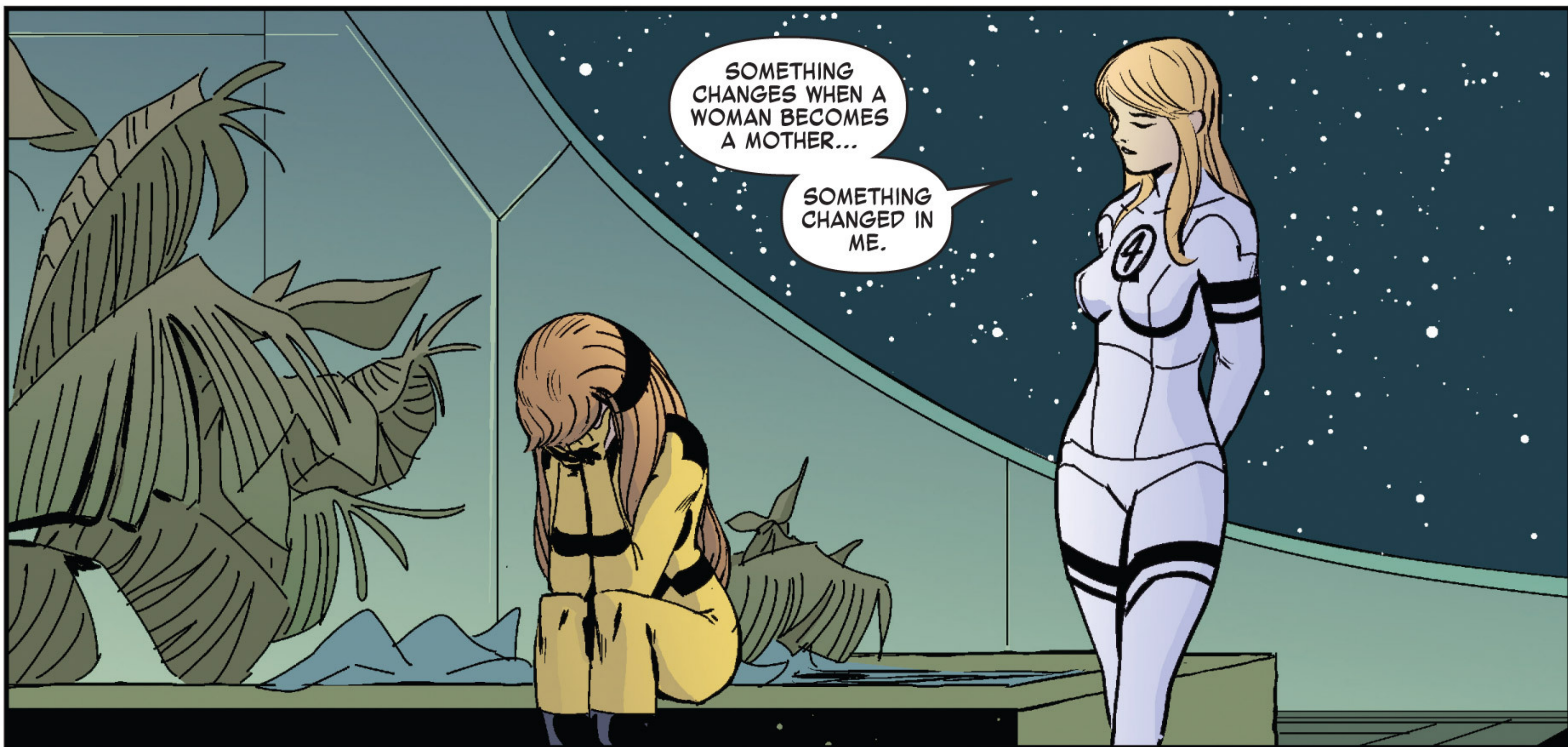
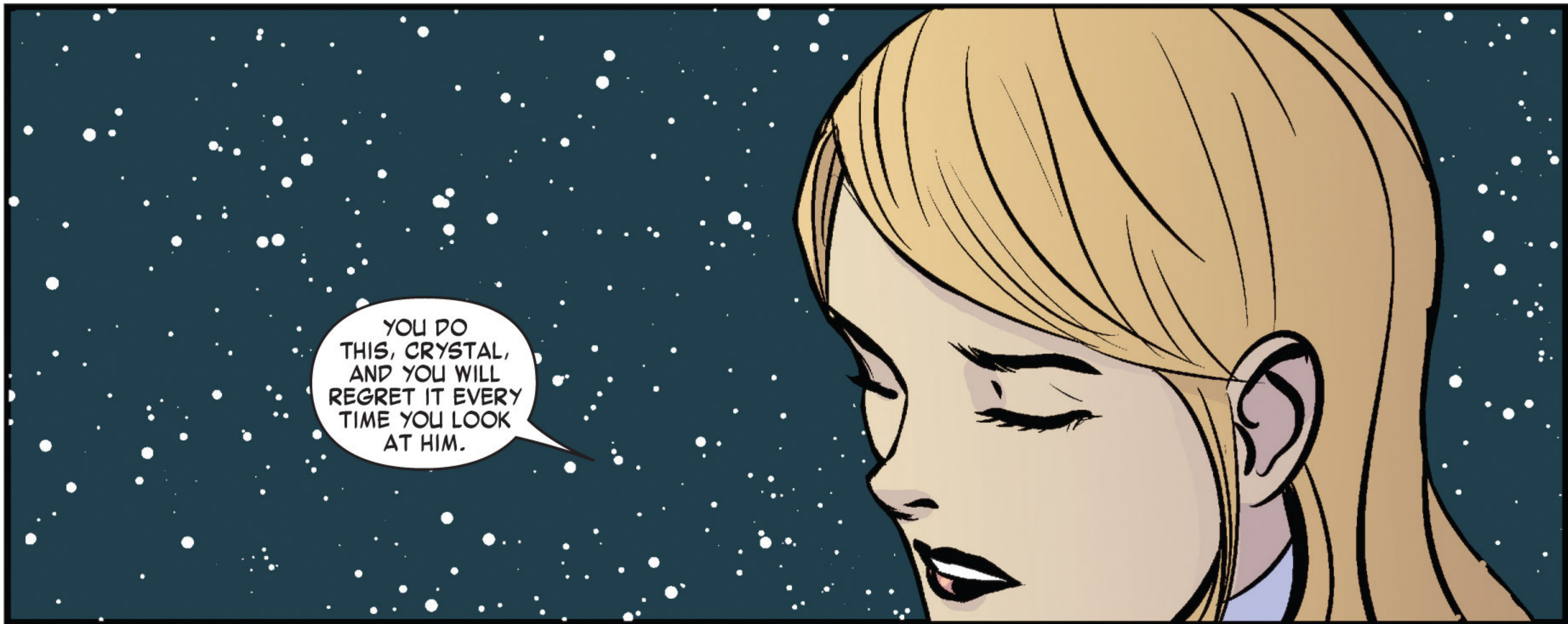
NO,
SUPREMO.

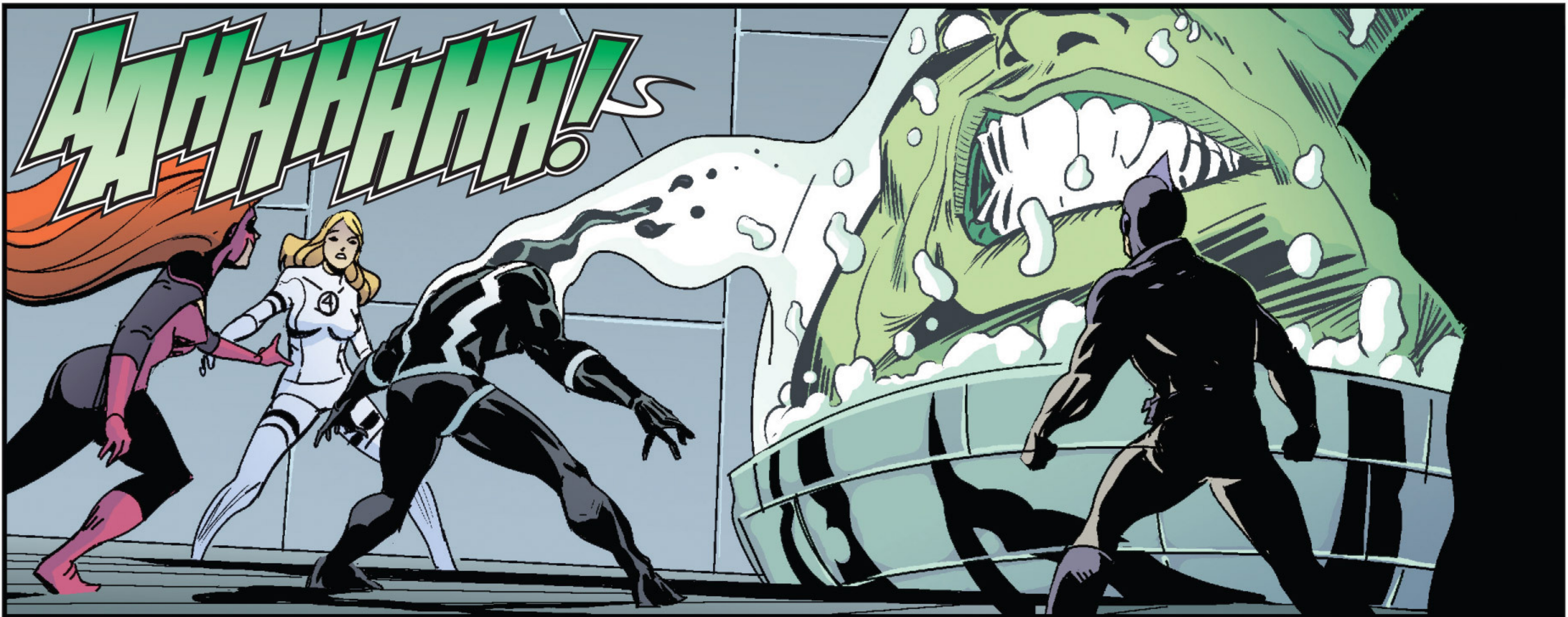
LOOK
DEEPER...

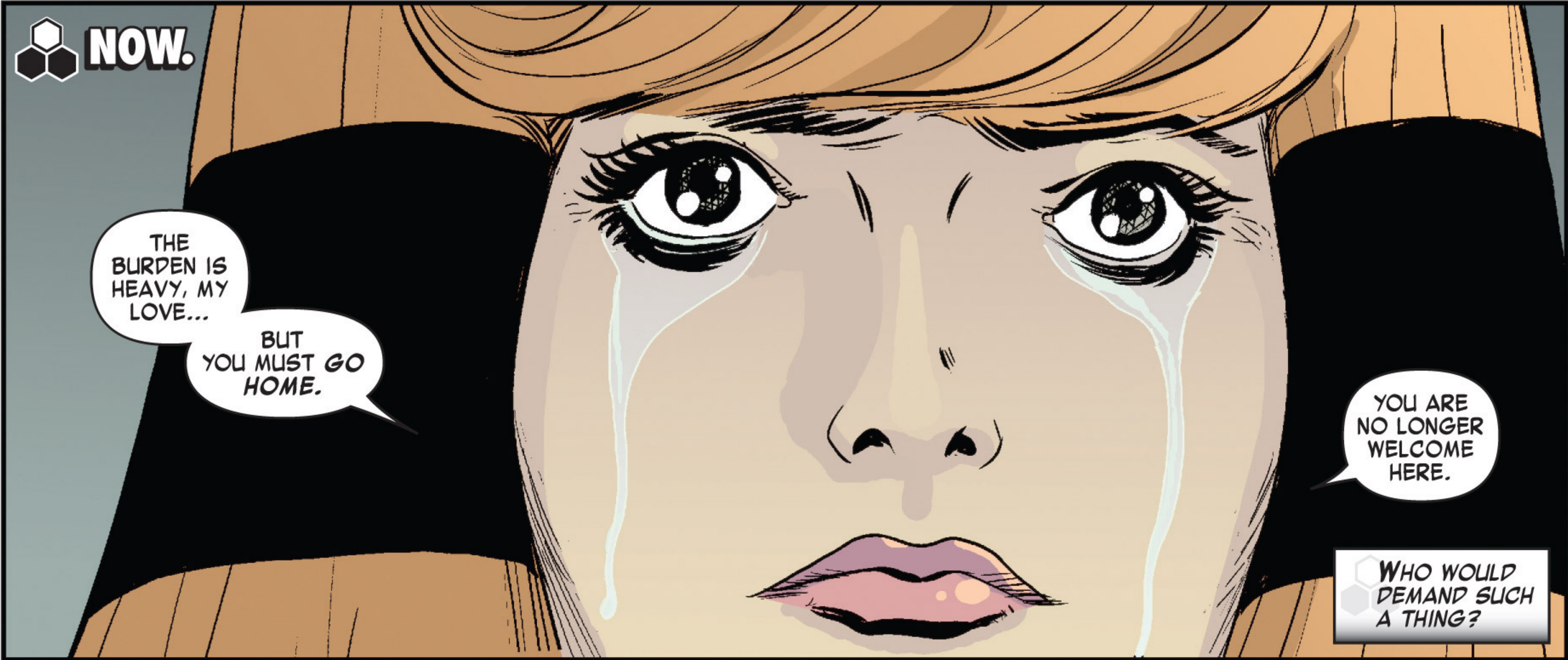
SOMETHING
HAS CHANGED.











THE
BURDEN IS
HEAVY, MY
LOVE...

BUT
YOU MUST GO
HOME.

YOU ARE
NO LONGER
WELCOME
HERE.

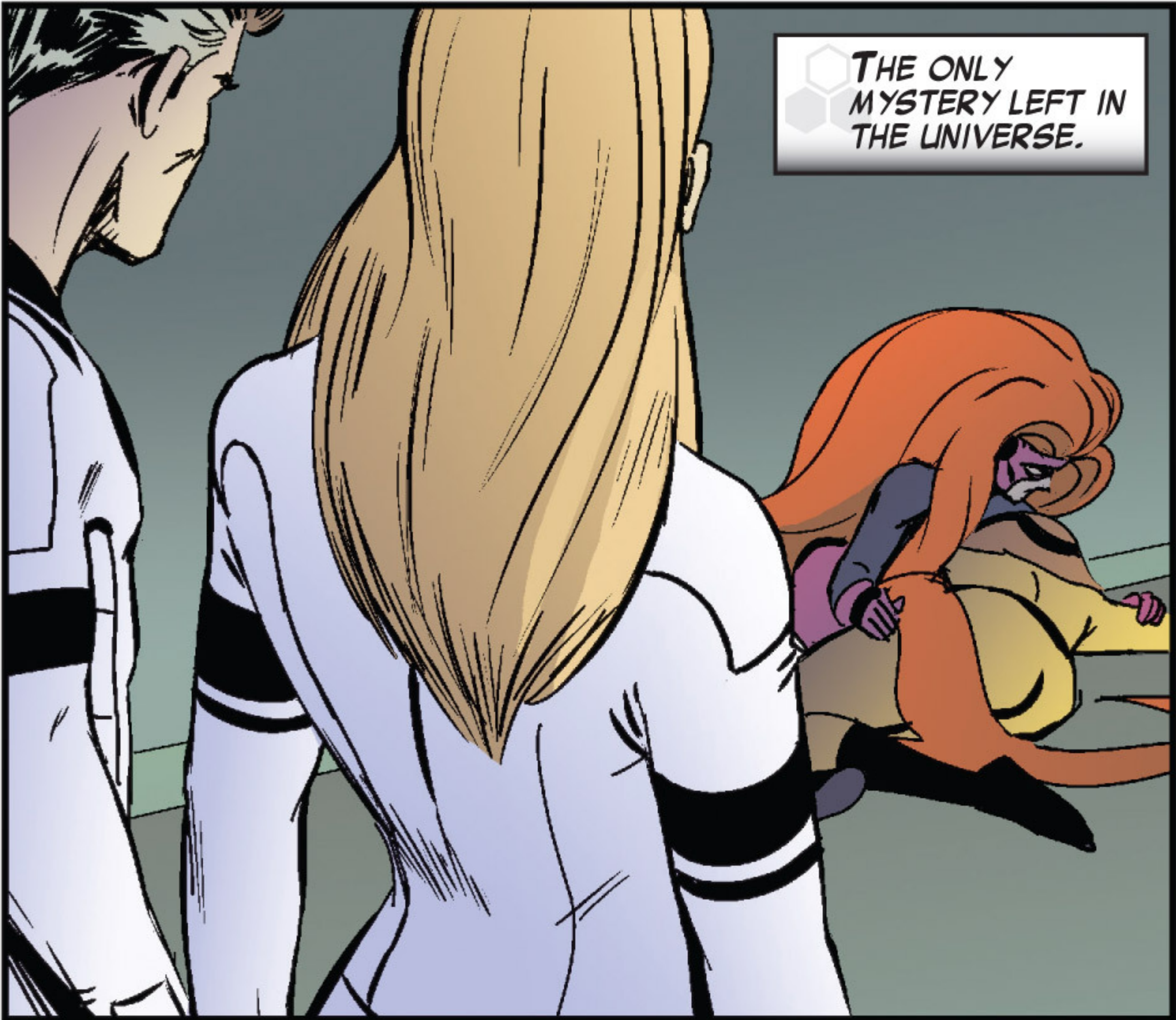
WHO WOULD
DEMAND SUCH
A THING?



WHO WOULD
RUIN LOVE?



THAT UNDEFINED,
PERFECT AND
FRAGILE THING.

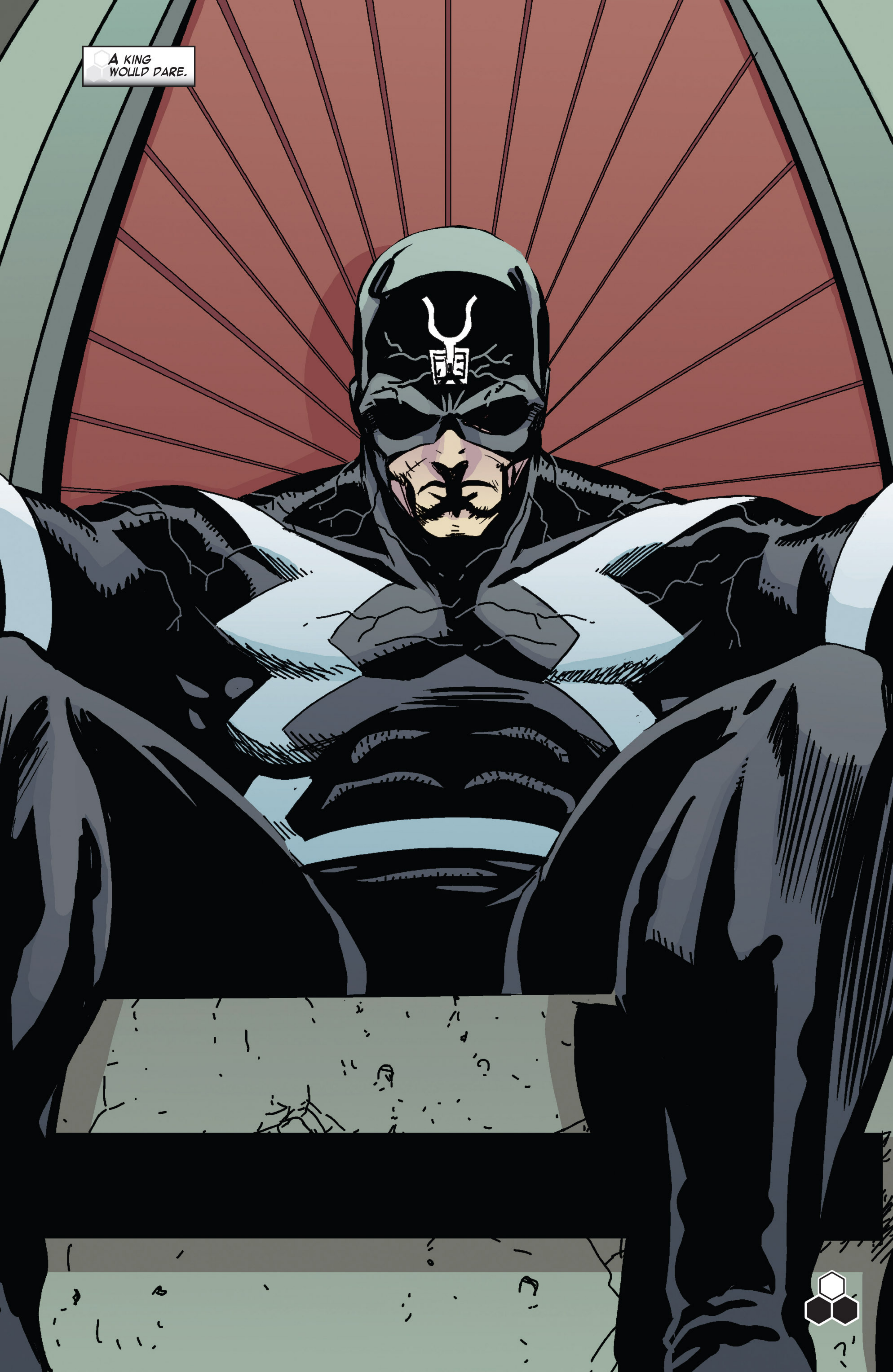


THE ONLY
MYSTERY LEFT IN
THE UNIVERSE.



WHO WOULD
DARE?

A KING
WOULD DARE.



FANTASTIC FAN PAGE 4

Well, the news is just starting to break about MARVEL NOW!, our big new end-of-the-year initiative that promises change and excitement throughout the Marvel stable—including Jonathan Hickman’s upcoming gig writing AVENGERS and NEW AVENGERS. What does that mean for the future of FANTASTIC FOUR and FF, you wonder? For the moment, I’m afraid I’ll need to keep you in suspense...but while we all wait for some answers, let’s see what you guys thought of our recent offerings.

Dear Hickman and Co.:

You have been getting a lot of mail from older readers recently, and the reason is simple: Something remarkable has been going on in your pages. It reminds me of the Walt Simonson run on the book in the 1980s (1990s?) And yes, I caught the reference in issue #581 when you mentioned the Time Variance Authority. Favorite new character: Bentley. Favorite recent line: “See, that joke is funny because Korr doesn’t know the atomic weight of nickel!”

Suggestion: I love the way you let Val mastermind things, but I think you should let her (and Franklin) grow up a little.

Several words of warning, since I want you to stay on these titles for a long time:

- 1) The strain of having to meet 2 deadlines a month can burn some writers out. Please don’t let this happen to you.
- 2) If you are going to kill off any more characters, let them stay dead. After they brought Jean Grey back to life, X-MEN was never the same again.

Your fan,
Bob Feingold

4444

This communication is intended to criticize Jonathan Hickman’s shameful portrayal of our brother Alchemist, Diablo, in his recent encounter with Dr. Doom in FF #8-10. In no shape, manner or form is Diablo inferior to the pretentious Doctor, as has been depicted in their previous encounters. Mr Hickman should find some other throw-away villain to take pratfalls. The Doctor, as a newcomer to the occult, cannot hope to rival the centuries of knowledge accumulated by Diablo; unless Diablo had OD’d on one of his potions, in which case, this should have been brought out.

Care should be taken, in the future, to accurately portray our brother. Diablo is the ONLY major protagonist, in the annals of literature, to accurately depict Alchemical warfare. The others are basically common magicians possessed of but a smattering of Alchemical skill. He is a totally Unique Individual without peers or imitators. Even that poseur, Dr. Alchemy at DC, is nothing without his Philosopher Stone. A 5-year-old could best him with it as he has no skills to fall back on. (And we can’t even begin to fathom from where the Fullmetal Alchemist’s powers come.)

Another common misconception is that Diablo sold his soul to Mephisto in return for Alchemical skill. This myth arose from the layman’s persistent inability to differentiate between Alchemy & Sorcery and Diablo & Faust. Our brother obtained his skill through lifetimes of diligent study and sacrifice. The Lord of Lies was exercising his skill when he led people to believe otherwise.

Admittedly, we have also long doubted our brother’s sanity as he could have used his miraculous potions, however short-lasting, to build a legitimate financial empire and military base. (Added thinking is a frequent side-effect of mystical

hallucinogenics) But this is no reason to denigrate his status as Master at the pinnacle of The Craft.

E. George
Alchemical Brotherhood
Newark,, NJ

As I believe I’m the layman who wrote the Diablo story involving Mephisto, E., sorry you didn’t care for it. We’ll try to treat Diablo with the care and consideration he deserves in the future.

Dear Mr. Hickman:

What I find satisfying about your writing is how you recognize that Reed Richards has always been the spoke around which the other characters revolve. Early on in your run you had a great little scene in which Reed told Sue he studied her more than anything else, that she was still a mystery to him. That brief interlude told me everything I needed to know about how much he loves her. And Johnny’s last words, how he wanted Reed to know about how he stood his ground, revealed how much Johnny sees Reed as a father-figure. That magnificent story arc that just ended might be more impressive as far as intelligent storytelling and organizing the narrative, but #605 tops it all, as far as I’m concerned. It was a poem, a meditation on male friendship, specifically that of Ben and Reed.

Nicely done, sir. You’re in the zone. Seriously, man, there’s nobody out there today writing better comics than you.

Michael Hornsby
Albany, NY

4444

WOW! Being an almost 40 year reader of the quartet I have to say, the scene with Franklin over the deceased Ben in the year 6012 (as well as Reed’s reaction) was without a doubt the most touching thing I’ve read in a while. I don’t think a lot of readers know the relationship Franklin has with his “Unca Ben”.

And, on a more humorous note, Young Franklin telling older Franklin he always wanted a Galactus, and the older ones response, was hilarious. THANKS.

Richard Alexander

4444

Guys,

Forty years of reading comics...two letters in a year!

The first was to ULTIMATE SPIDEY and this one is for FANTASTIC FOUR #605.

I have to admit the Thing is one of my all-time favorites (I still want more of the Thing exo-skeleton from back in the day) but I have to admit that on the whole FF loses me on occasion..too much scientific flim-flam, kinda like *Star Trek* with the ever present ability to re-align the warp drive to change things to suit. But this story was simplicity itself and reconnected the Ben/Reed relationship.

I love what you have done with the Thing and his one week a year off from being the rocky guy (almost like the exo-skeleton idea...have I mentioned I’d love to see that back?)

This story and the current run of USM are what made me like comics in the late 60s: the fun of it! There’s a place for dark and dangerous but it’s not what it should ALL be about!

You still have me hooked...

Until Captain Marvel returns in a green costume... make mine Marvel.

Gav Beadle
Perth
Western Australia

It’s funny that you should mention that old Thing exo-skeleton, Gav...but I can say no more for the time being!

O Most Marvelous Helmsmen of the Fantastic Four,

I haven’t written a letter to Marvel since I was a kid in the 70s, back when Stan the Man was driving the bus. I devoured my monthly Marvels voraciously and wrote with typical, pre-adolescent fanboy enthusiasm, even garnering a no-prize or two. Back then, I wrote with my own ideas about new adventures for the heroes and new villains they might encounter.

Today, I am the happy father of two boys, ages 6 and 10, who, thanks to dad’s not-so-subtle persuasion, have also become Friends of ol’ Marvel. Together, we make our weekly forays to the local comic book shop and later spend time reading the latest exploits of our favorite heroes. This is quality time for us and I must say that the writing and the artwork has taken significant strides over the past 40 years. The stories are more thrilling and timely than ever and the artwork leaps from the pages with kinetic splendor. I am thrilled that my boys both enjoy the comics so much and am further delighted to be re-discovering the wonder of your fantastic work along with them.

I write today to express my amazement and gratitude over issue #605 of FANTASTIC FOUR. My oldest and I just read it tonight and I was practically moved to tears - no foolin’. We picked up FANTASTIC FOUR back during the death of Johnny Storm and have followed it, along with the equally stunning FF, ever since. So much has happened to the group in that short time that we’ve been left breathless (and, yes, sometimes a little bewildered) at the end of each issue. With #605, we had a chance to settle back, catch our breath and realize that heroes have another important task beyond saving the world with each story arc and that is to take the time to acknowledge and truly appreciate each other. Watching as Ben Grimm aged over thousands of years, diligently holding down the fort that Reed built with the raw style and strength that is his alone, was a wonder. Seeing Reed realize that this powerful yet ultimately humble man was not just his teammate but his friend was one of the most moving scenes in recent Marvel memory.

Again, this demonstrates the mental and emotional dexterity that makes Marvel comics such a joy to experience. The ability of Marvel to remind us to step back from the unrelenting fury that is often our day-to-day lives and take just a moment to remember that without each other we could not be whole. Too often, we forget to consider just how much others do for us, just how deep devotion runs. Unlike Reed, we may never have the opportunity to witness how far someone’s dedication may go. #605 eloquently persuades us to enjoy special moments with those close to us before the next whirlwind adventure sweeps us away into distraction. Having seen 4000 years into the future, Reed seems to realize that our time together is, indeed, brief and that’s something we would all do well to remember.

Thanks, O Mighty Marvel, for taking time out of all the rollicking adventure to remind us of what’s really important.

Excelsior!
Jeff, Liam & Donovan Whelan
DeKalb, IL

Glad to have all three of you with us, Jeff, and that you’ve chosen to make Marvel such a central part of your lives! That’s about all we could hope for!

Tom B
7/5/12

As always, if you’ve got an opinion to share, you can e-mail it to us at MHEROES@MARVEL.COM. Be sure to mark your letters as “Okay To Print!” if you’d like to see them featured here on the Fan Page!

**TILT YOUR HEAD FOR
NEXT FANTASTIC JOINT
COVERS!**

**FANTASTIC
FOUR** #610

F #22



**HICKMAN
ARAUJO
PETER**

**HICKMAN
STEGMAN
MOUNTS**

TM

MARVEL

22



BENTLEY WITTMAN, THE CRIMINAL GENIUS KNOWN AS **THE WIZARD**, HAS GROWN PROGRESSIVELY MORE UNHINGED. THE WIZARD CREATED SEVERAL **CLONES** OF HIMSELF, TURNING THEM INTO LIVING WEAPONS. **REED RICHARDS** TOOK IN THE LAST SURVIVING CLONE, **BENTLEY 23**, AND MADE HIM A STUDENT IN THE **FUTURE FOUNDATION**. THE WIZARD WAS LIBERATED FROM PRISON BY THE SUPER-GENIUSES OF **ADVANCED IDEA MECHANICS**.

“YOU ARE WHATEVER YOU WANT TO BE”



REED RICHARDS
MISTER FANTASTIC



SUSAN RICHARDS
INVISIBLE WOMAN



JOHNNY STORM
THE HUMAN TORCH



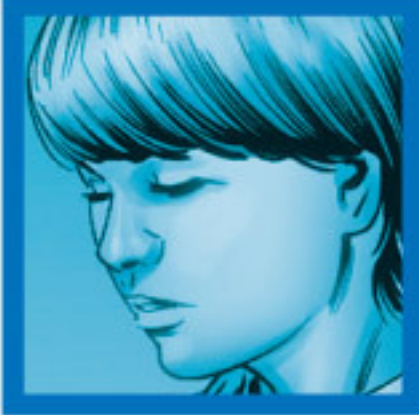
BENJAMIN GRIMM
THE THING



VALERIA RICHARDS



FRANKLIN RICHARDS



ALEX POWER



DRAGON MAN



WU & VIL



MIK, KORR & TURG



TONG



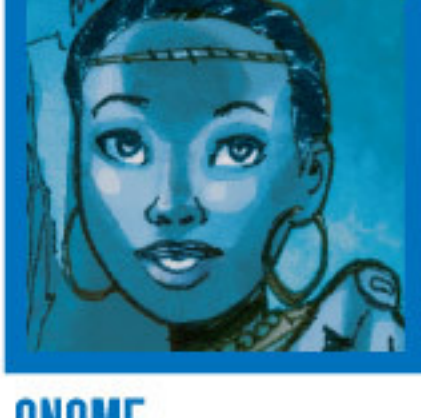
LEECH



ARTIE



BENTLEY



ONOME

WRITER: **JONATHAN HICKMAN**

ARTIST: **ANDRÉ ARAÚJO**

COLOR ARTIST: **CRIS PETER**

LETTERER: **VC's CLAYTON COWLES**

COVER ARTISTS: **RYAN STEGMAN & MARTE GRACIA**

ASSISTANT EDITOR: **JAKE THOMAS**

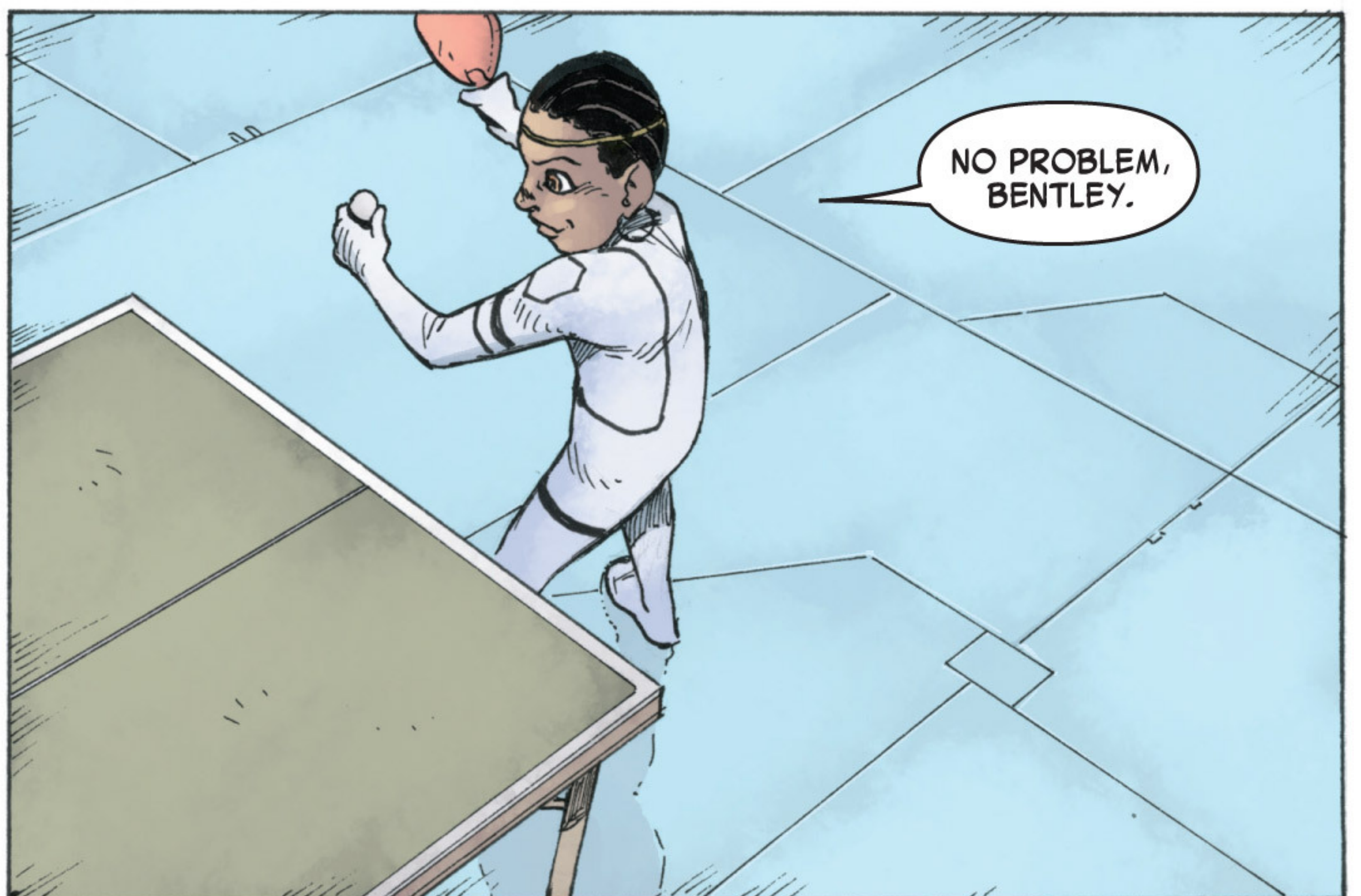
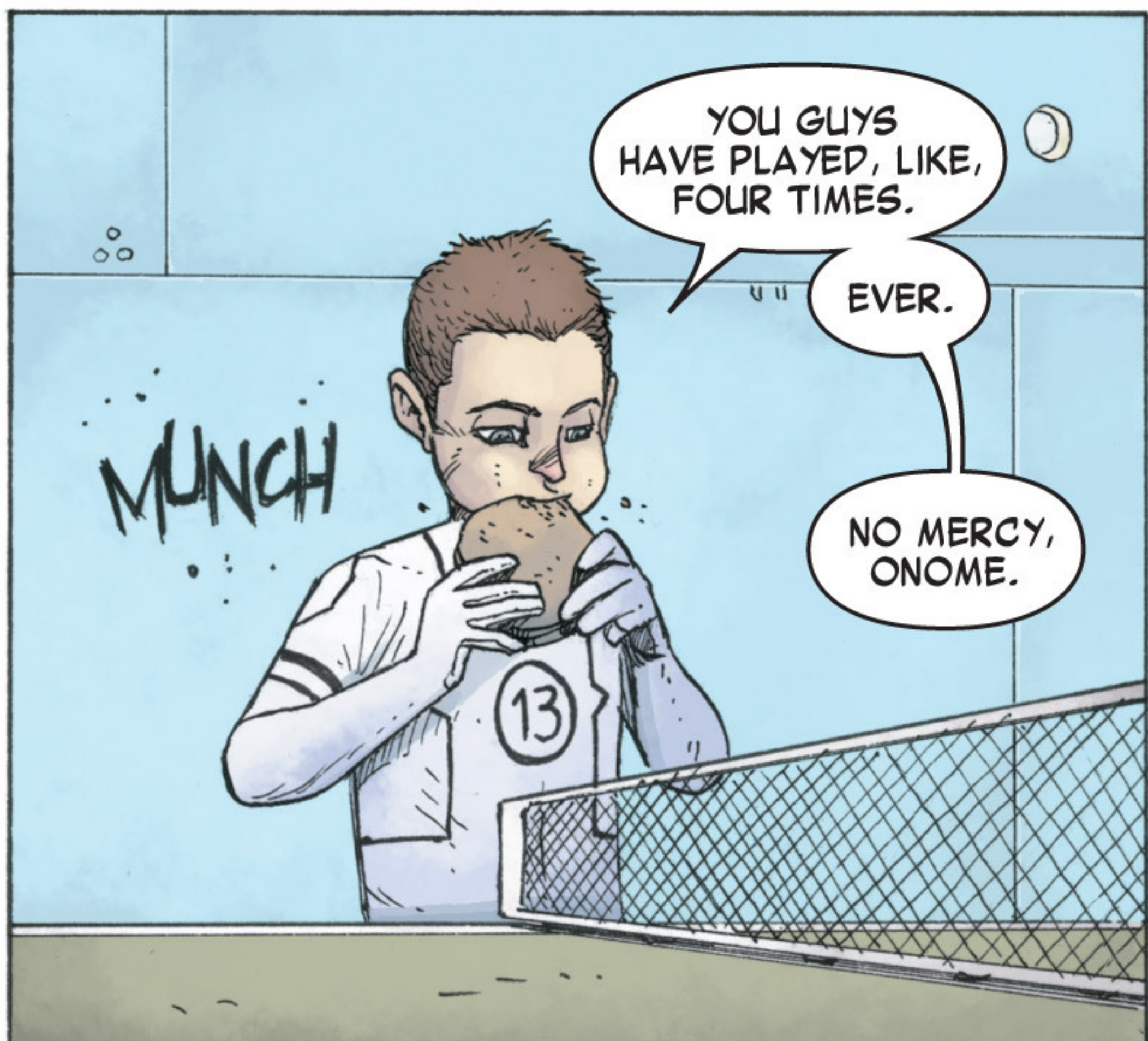
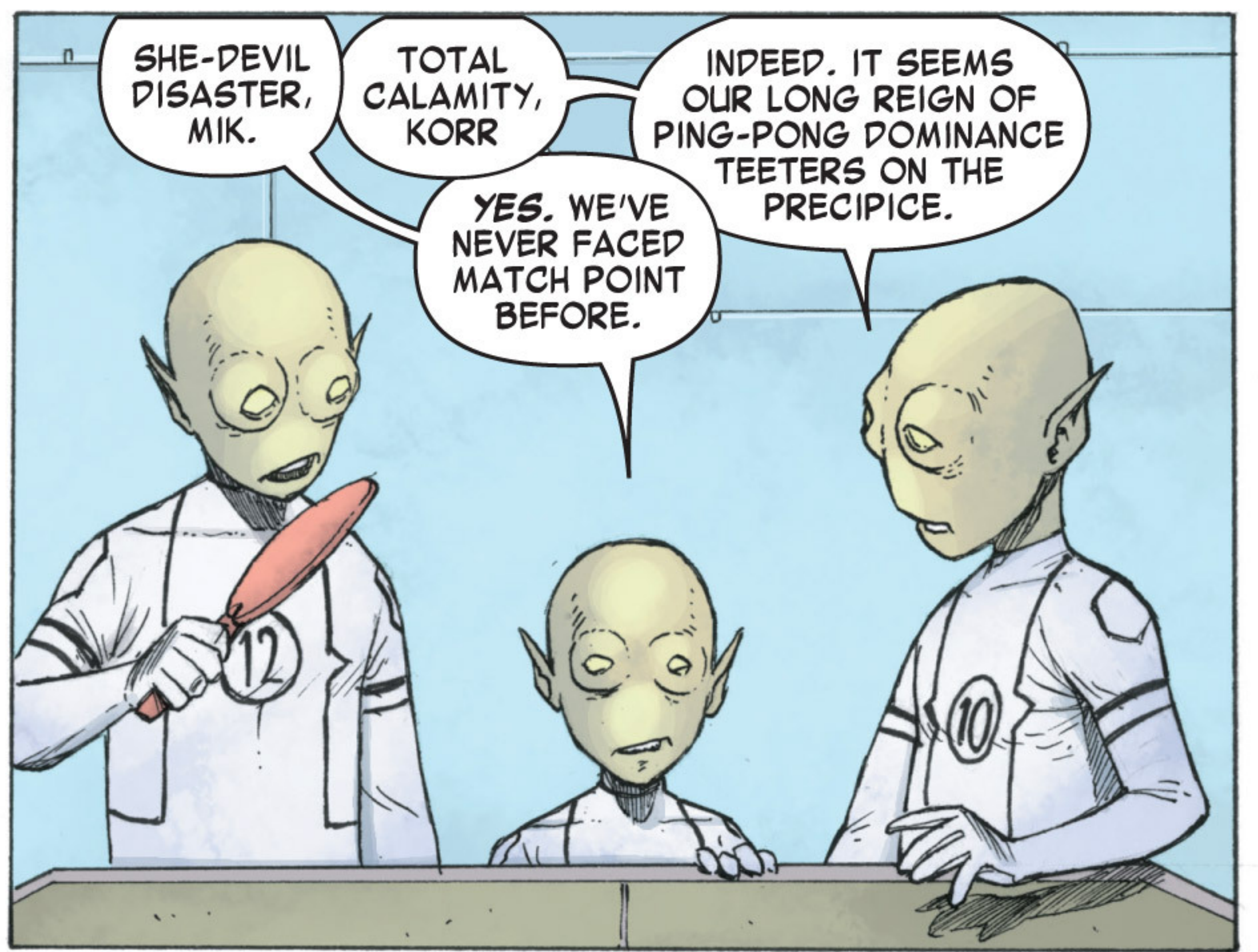
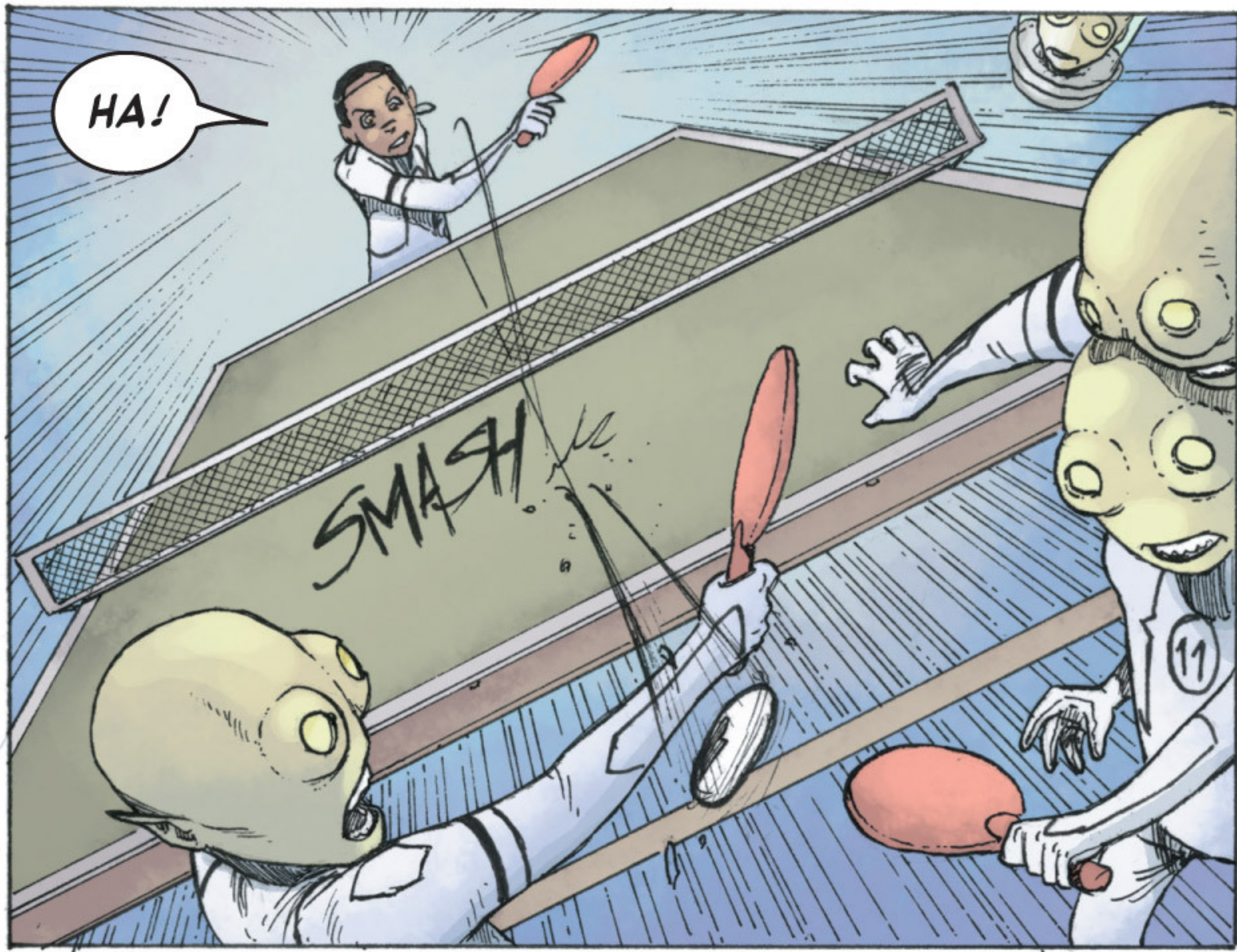
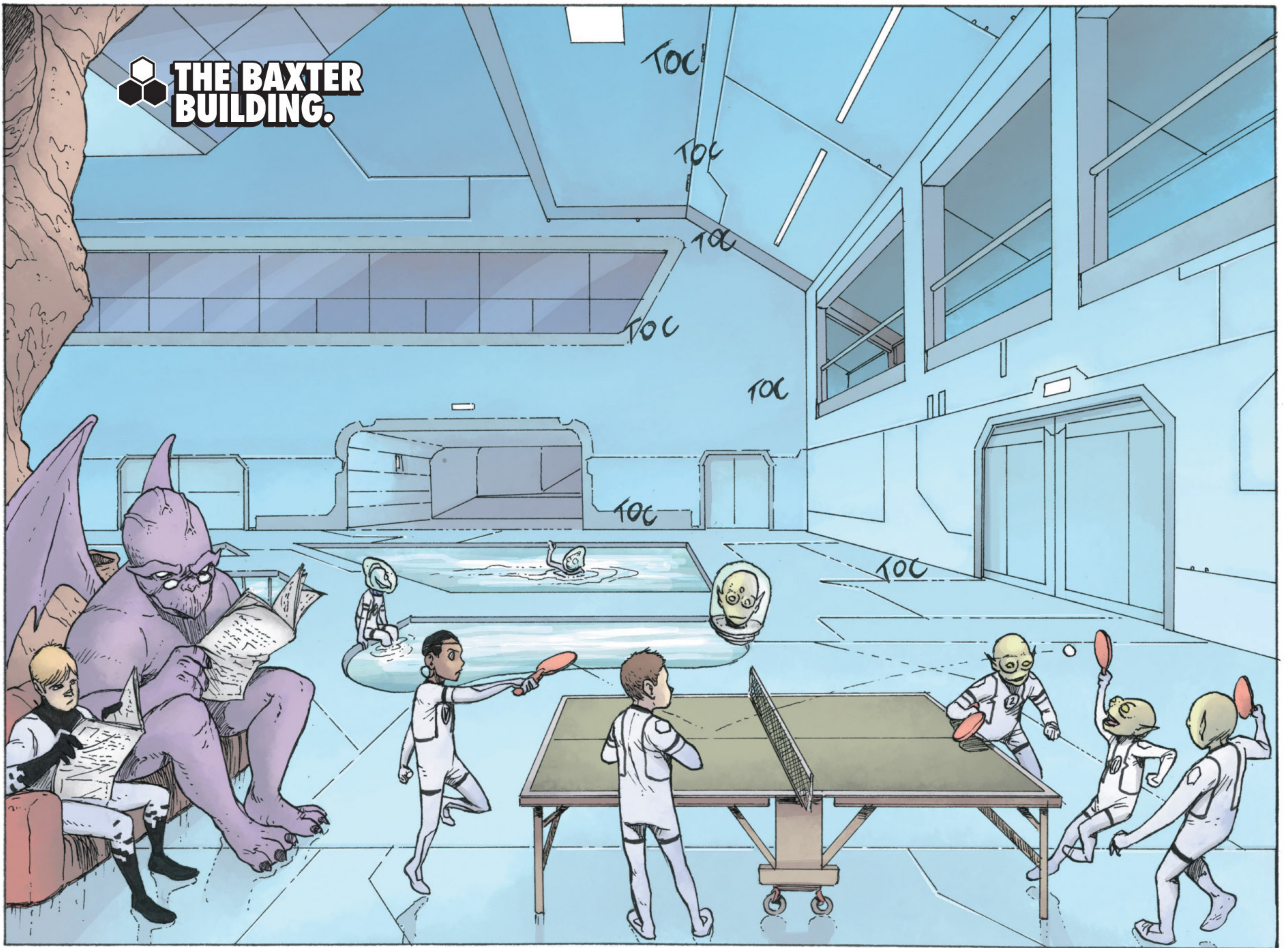
ASSOCIATE EDITOR: **LAUREN SANKOVITCH**

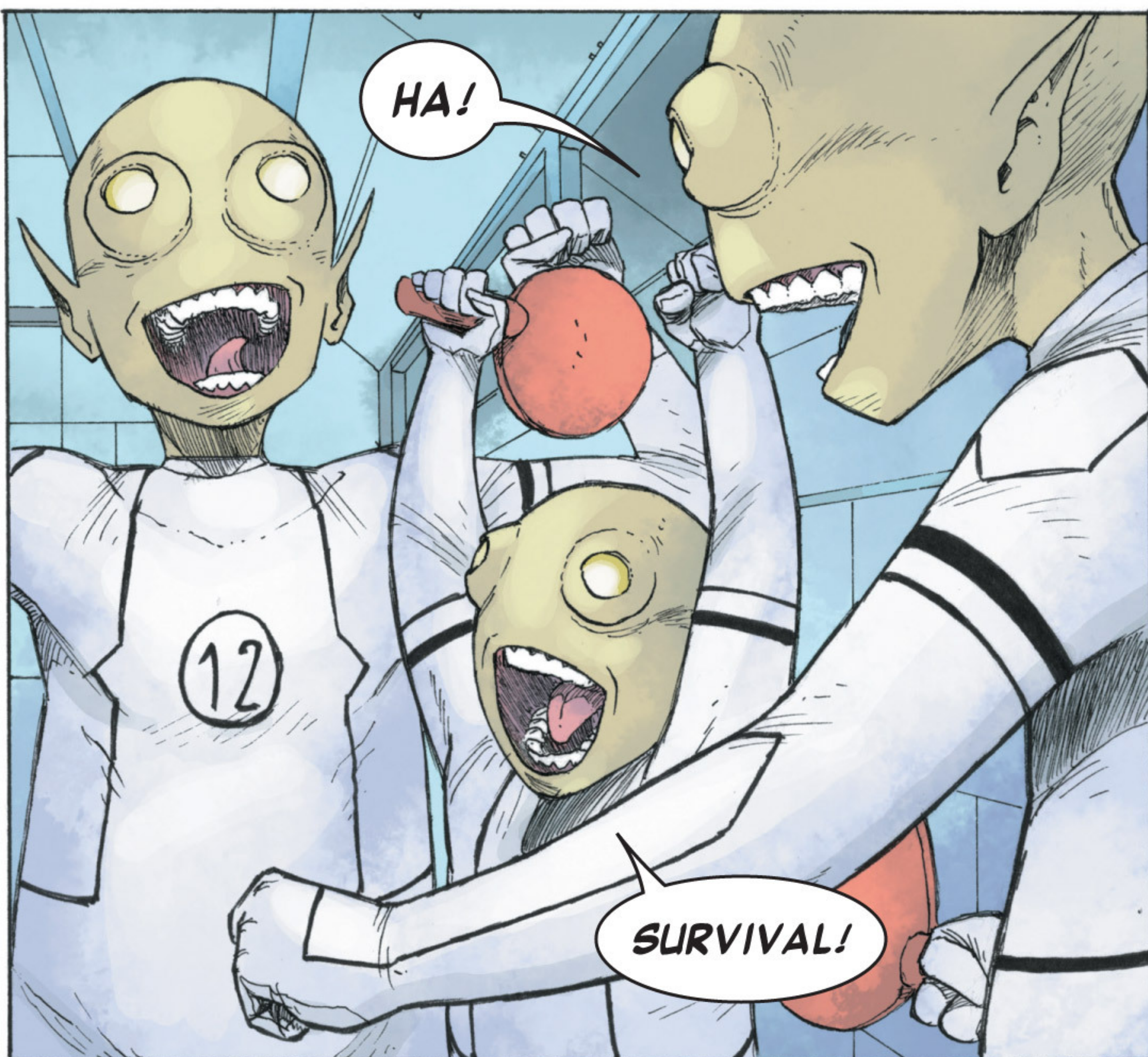
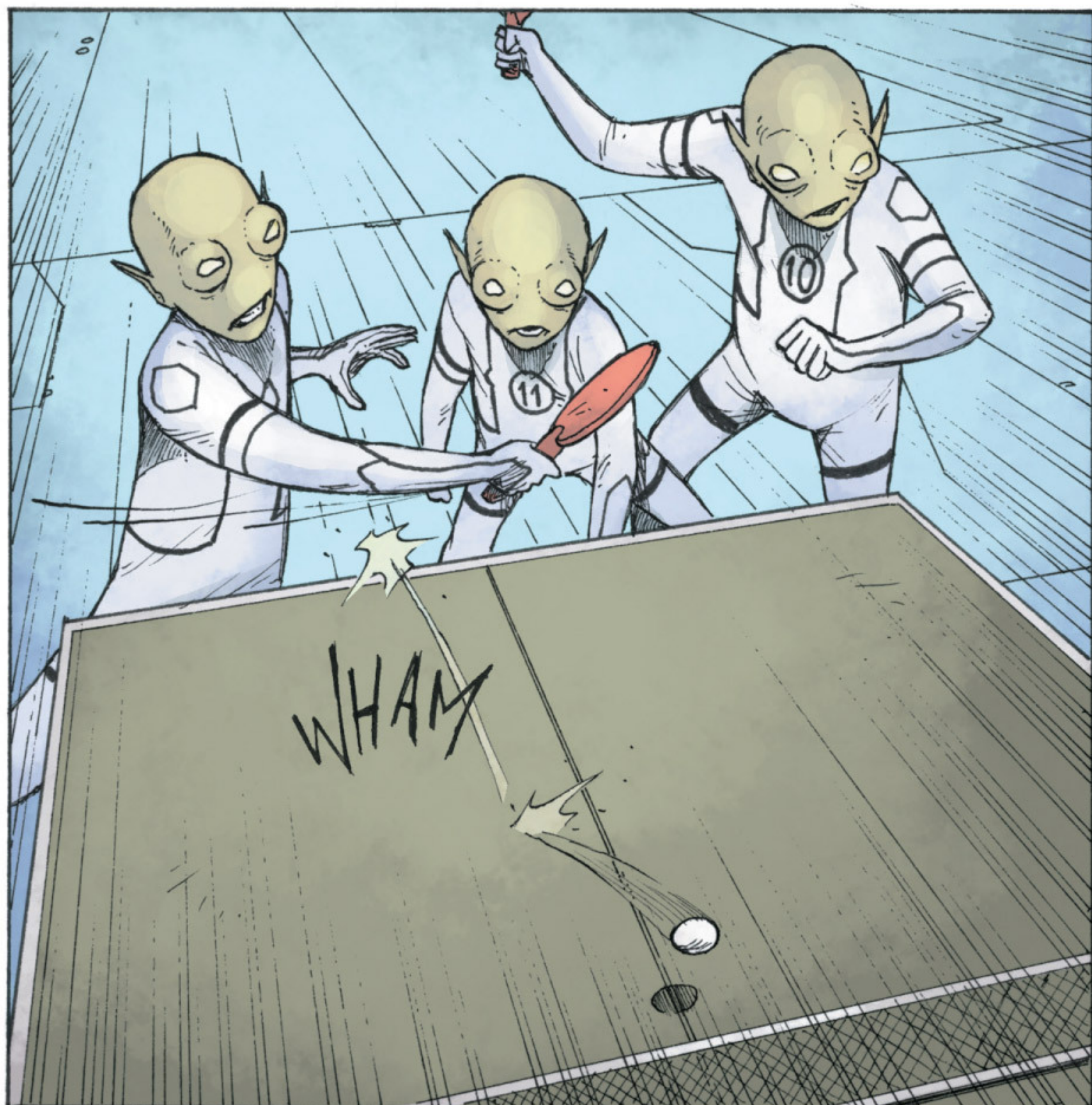
EDITOR: **TOM BREVOORT**

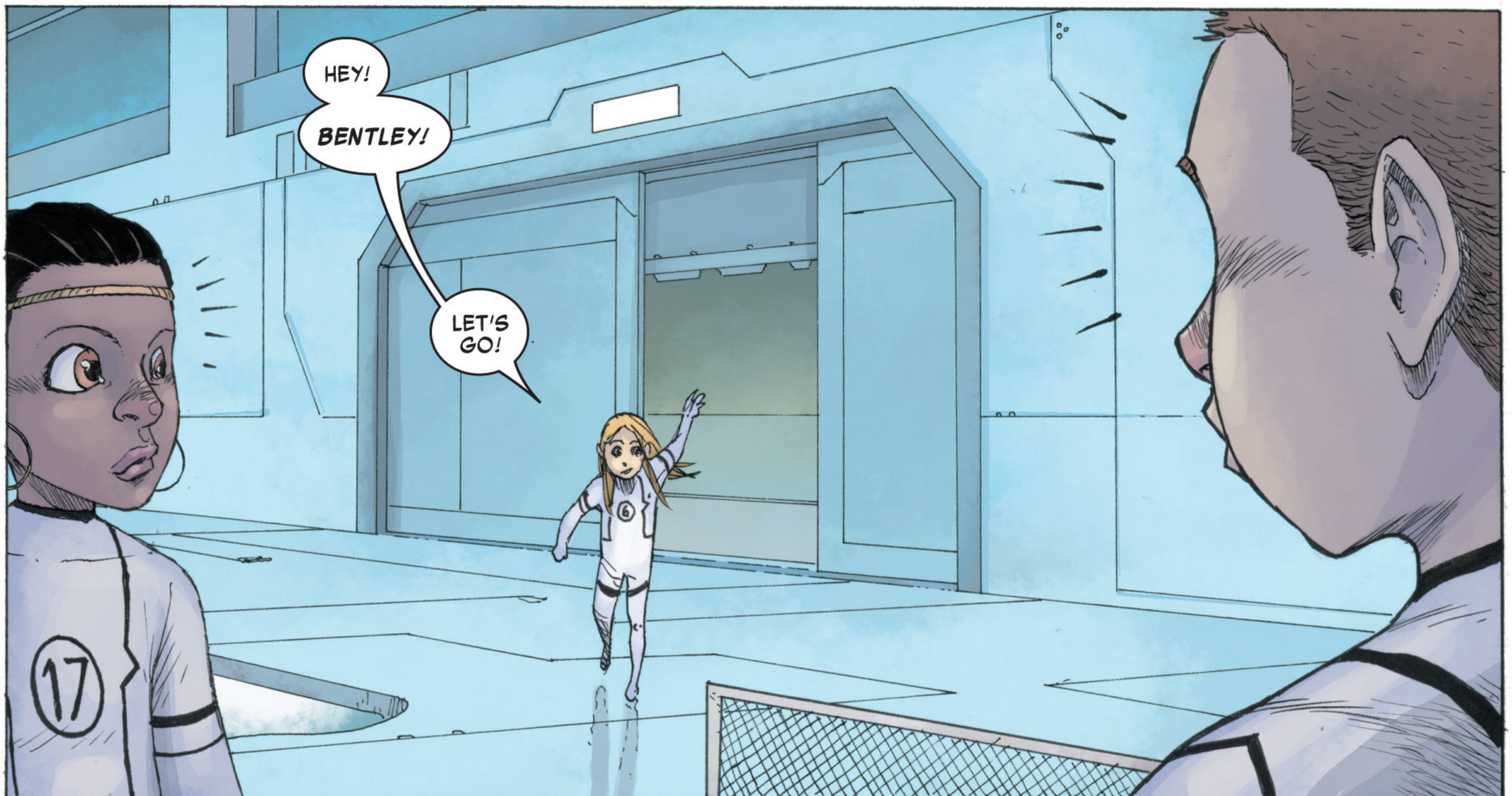
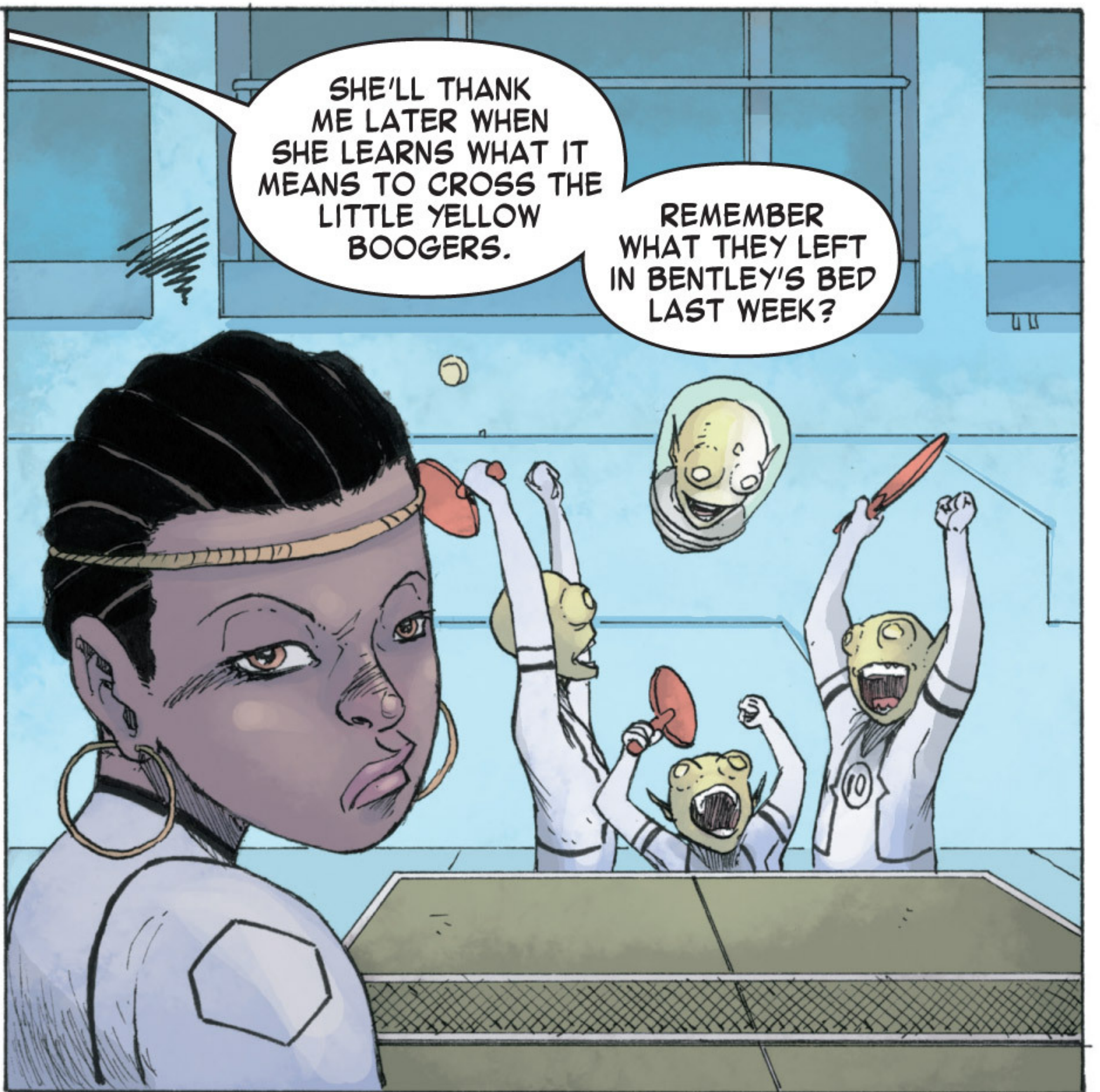
EDITOR IN CHIEF: AXEL ALONSO
CHIEF CREATIVE OFFICER: JOE QUESADA
PUBLISHER: DAN BUCKLEY
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: ALAN FINE

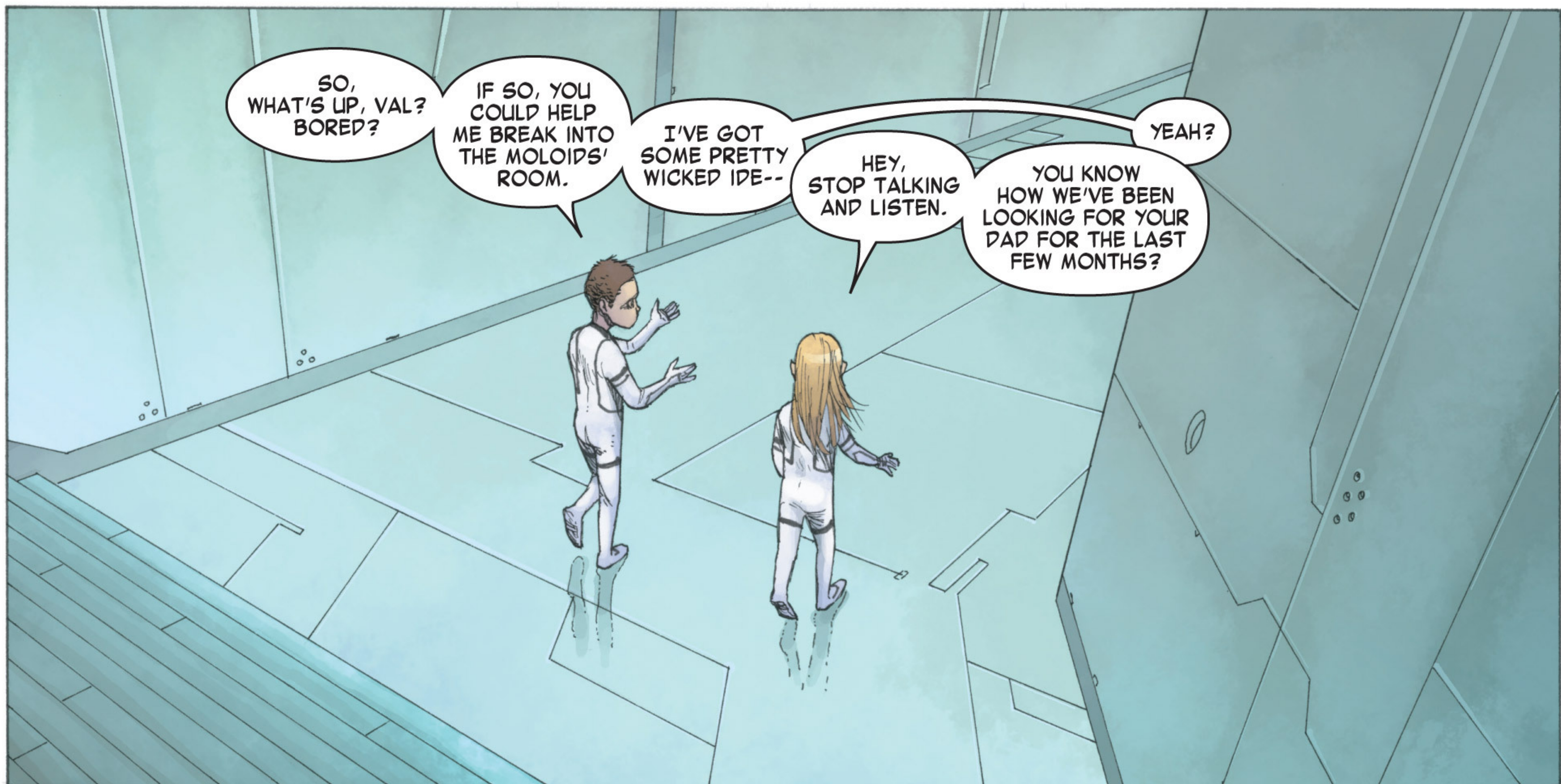


THE BAXTER BUILDING.









SO,
WHAT'S UP, VAL?
BORED?

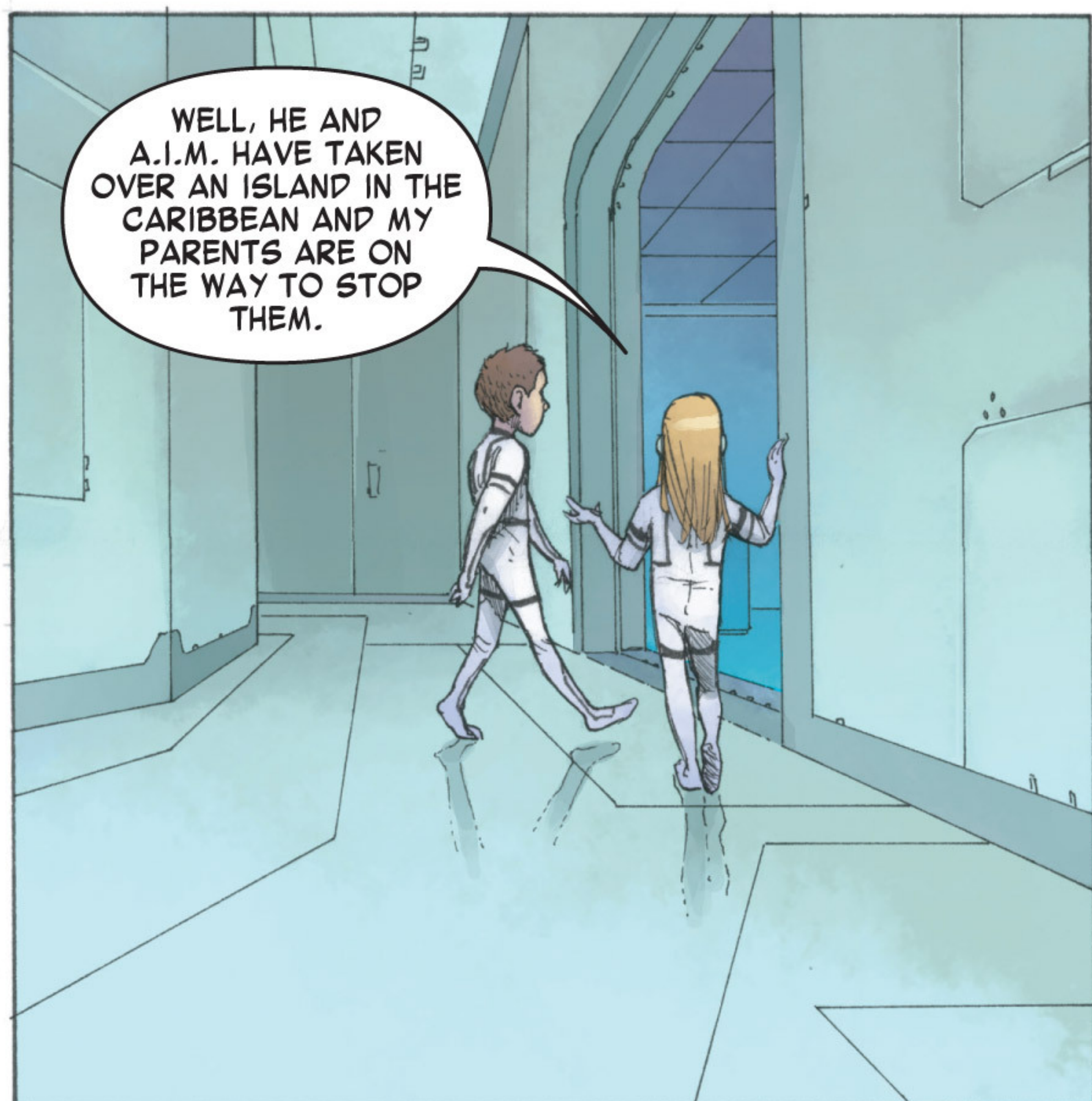
IF SO, YOU
COULD HELP
ME BREAK INTO
THE MOLOIDS'
ROOM.

I'VE GOT
SOME PRETTY
WICKED IDE--

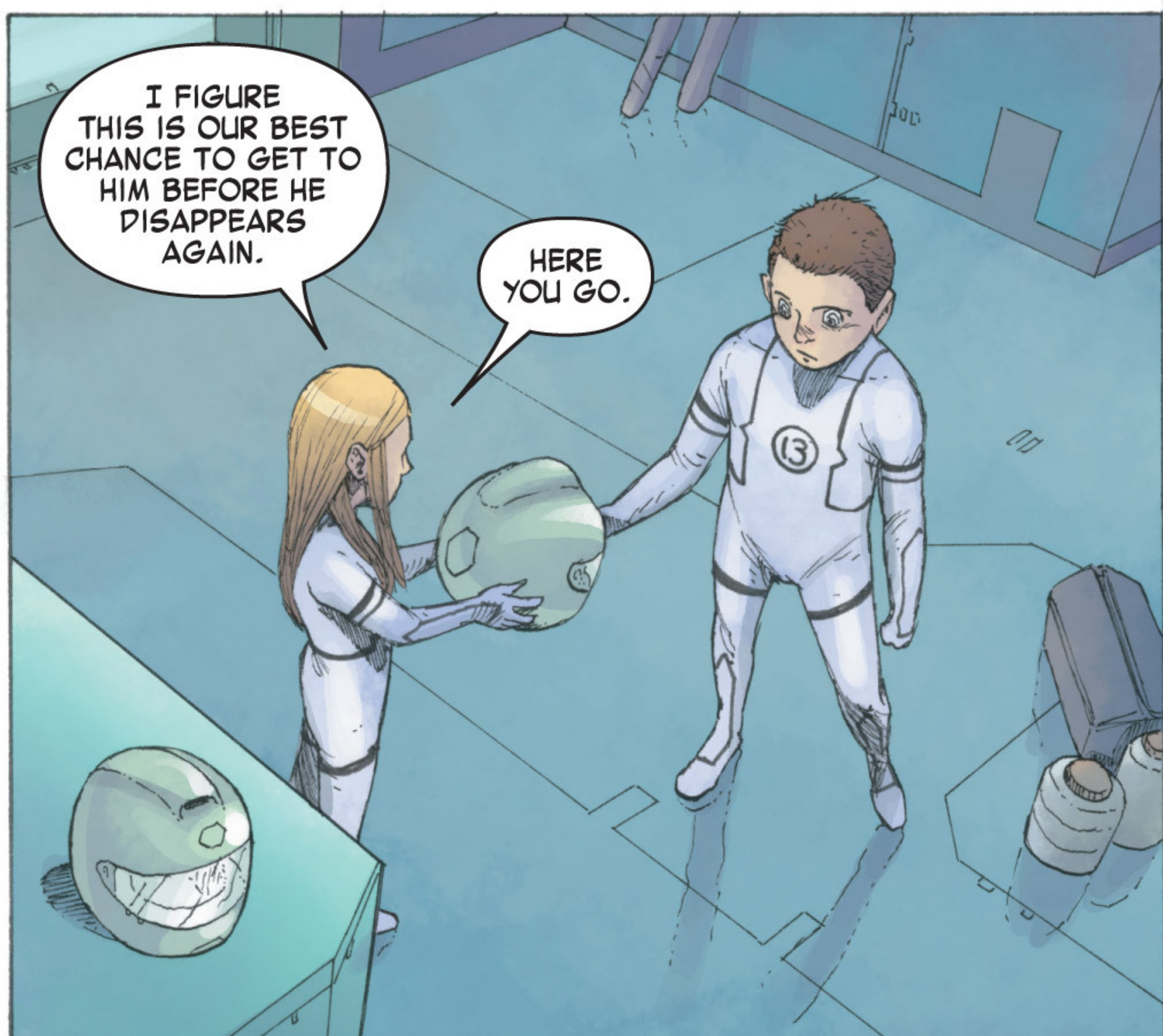
HEY,
STOP TALKING
AND LISTEN.

YOU KNOW
HOW WE'VE BEEN
LOOKING FOR YOUR
DAD FOR THE LAST
FEW MONTHS?

YEAH?

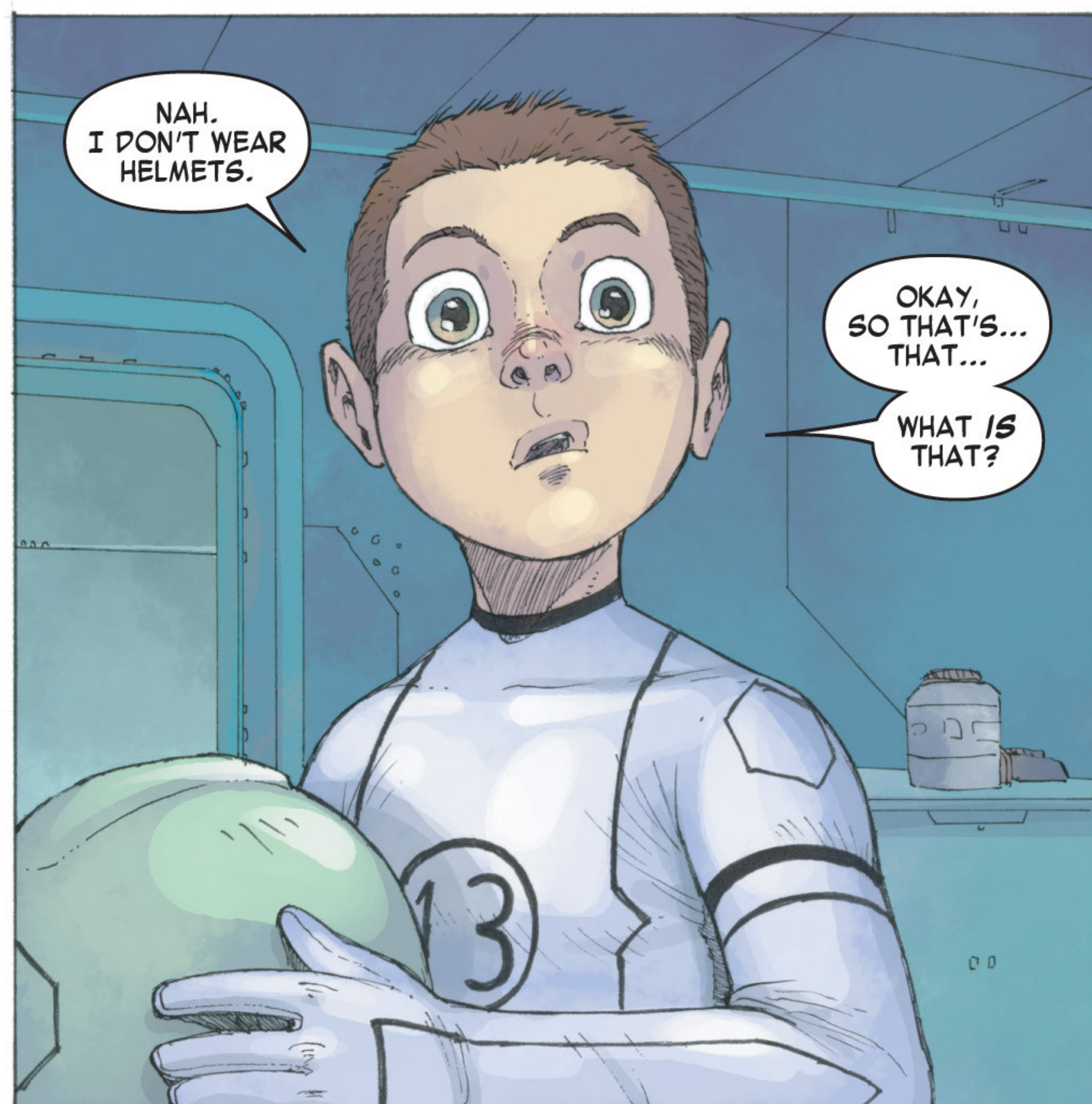


WELL, HE AND
A.I.M. HAVE TAKEN
OVER AN ISLAND IN THE
CARIBBEAN AND MY
PARENTS ARE ON
THE WAY TO STOP
THEM.



I FIGURE
THIS IS OUR BEST
CHANCE TO GET TO
HIM BEFORE HE
DISAPPEARS
AGAIN.

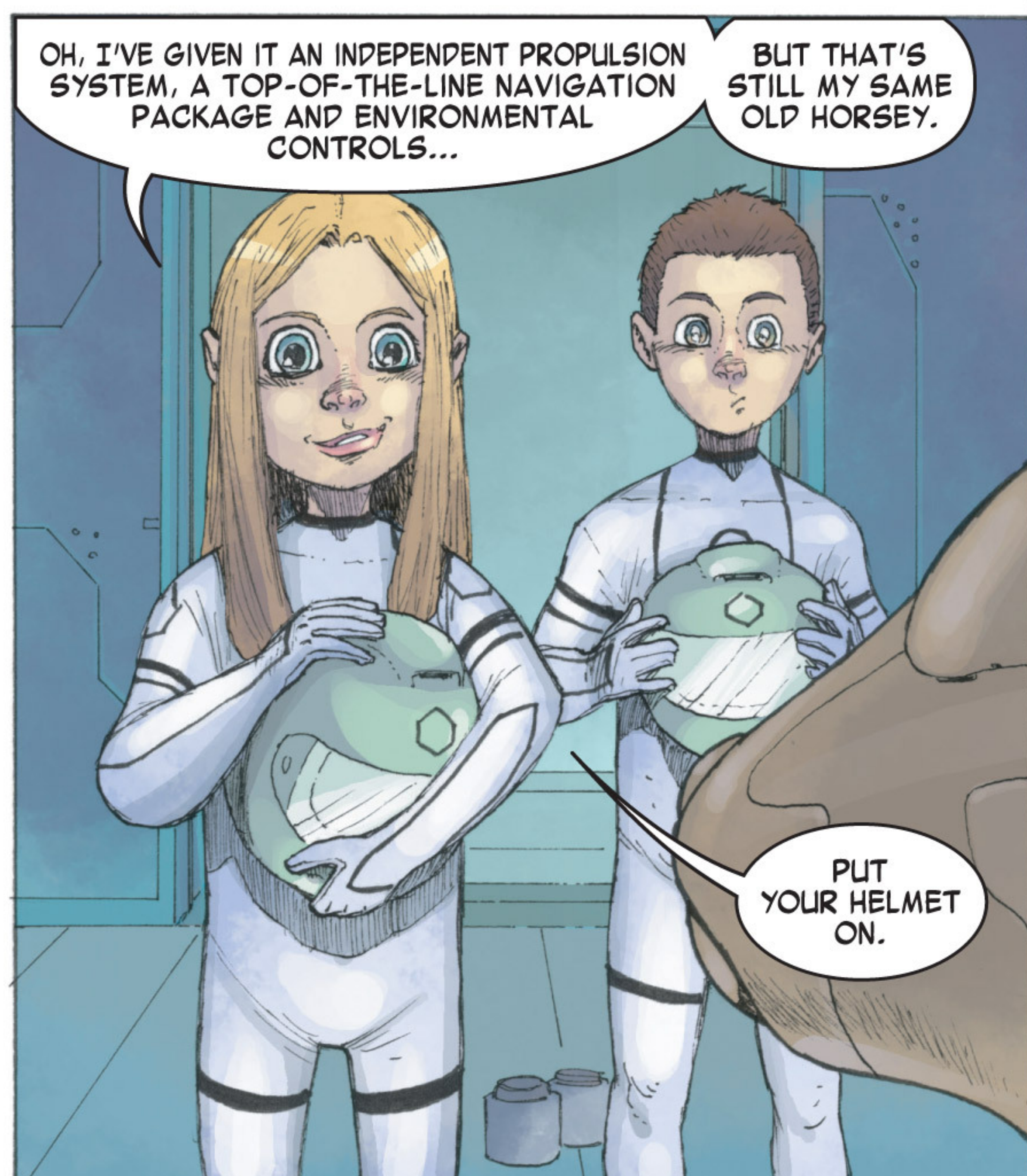
HERE
YOU GO.



NAH.
I DON'T WEAR
HELMETS.

OKAY,
SO THAT'S...
THAT...

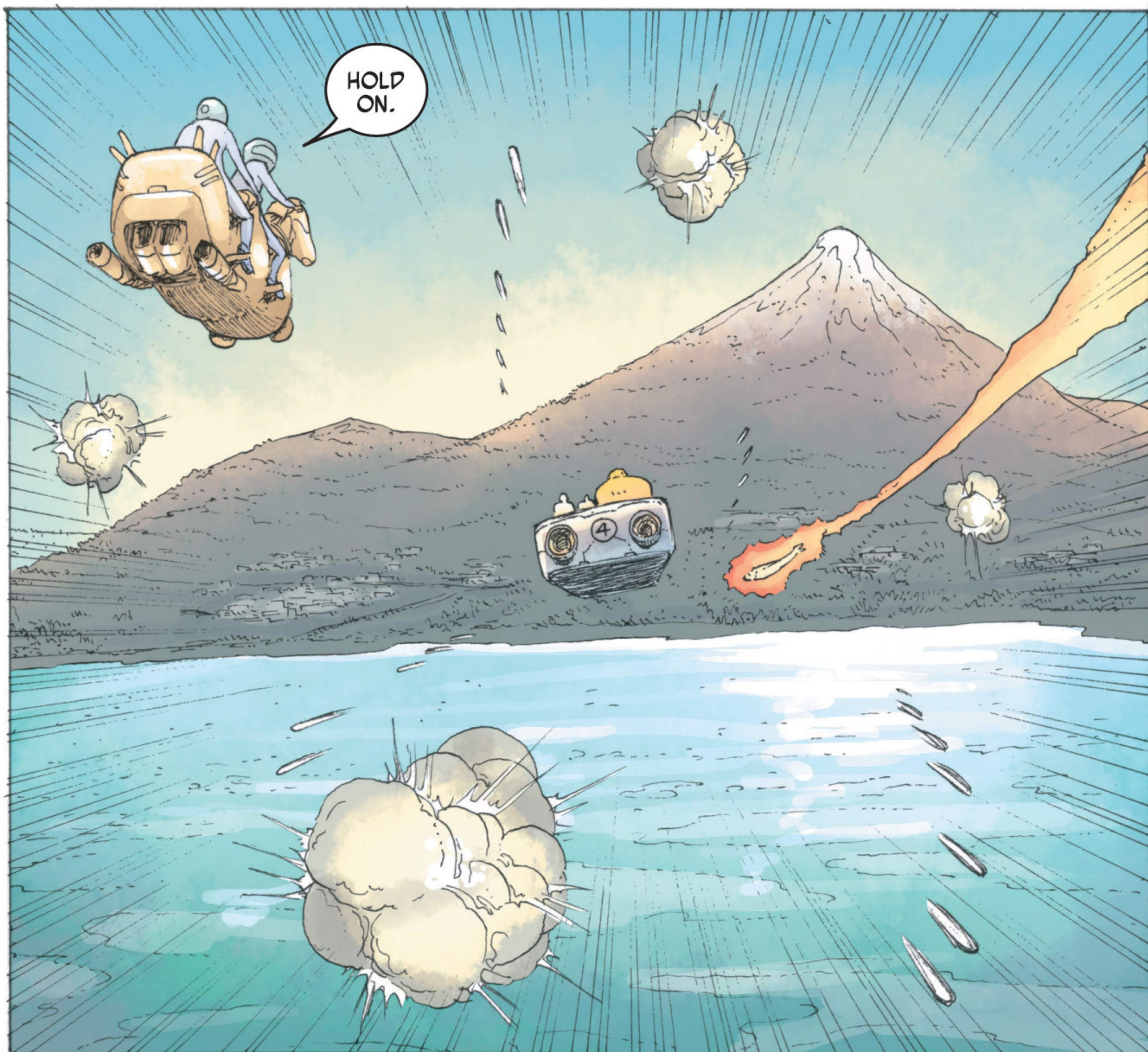
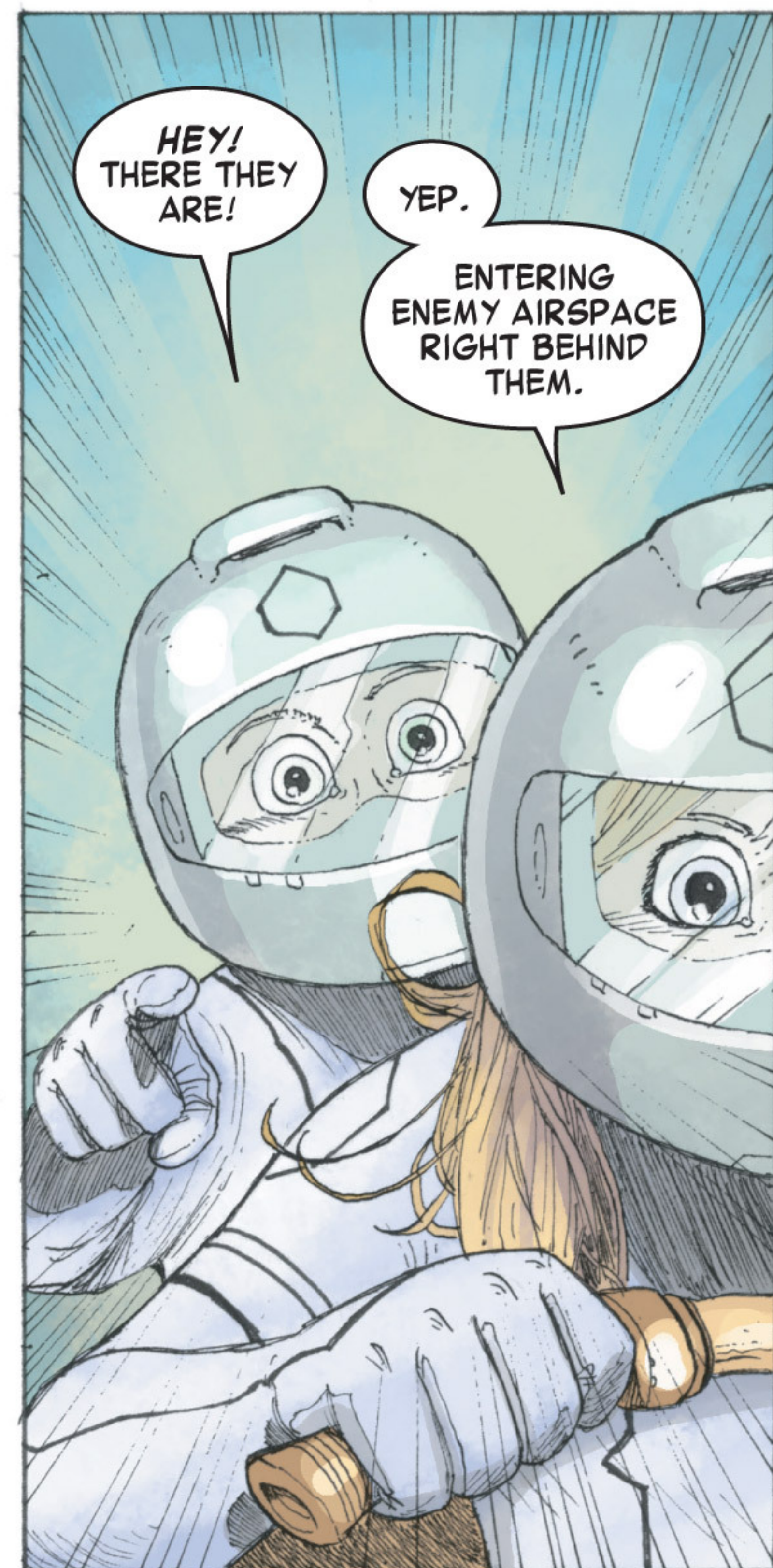
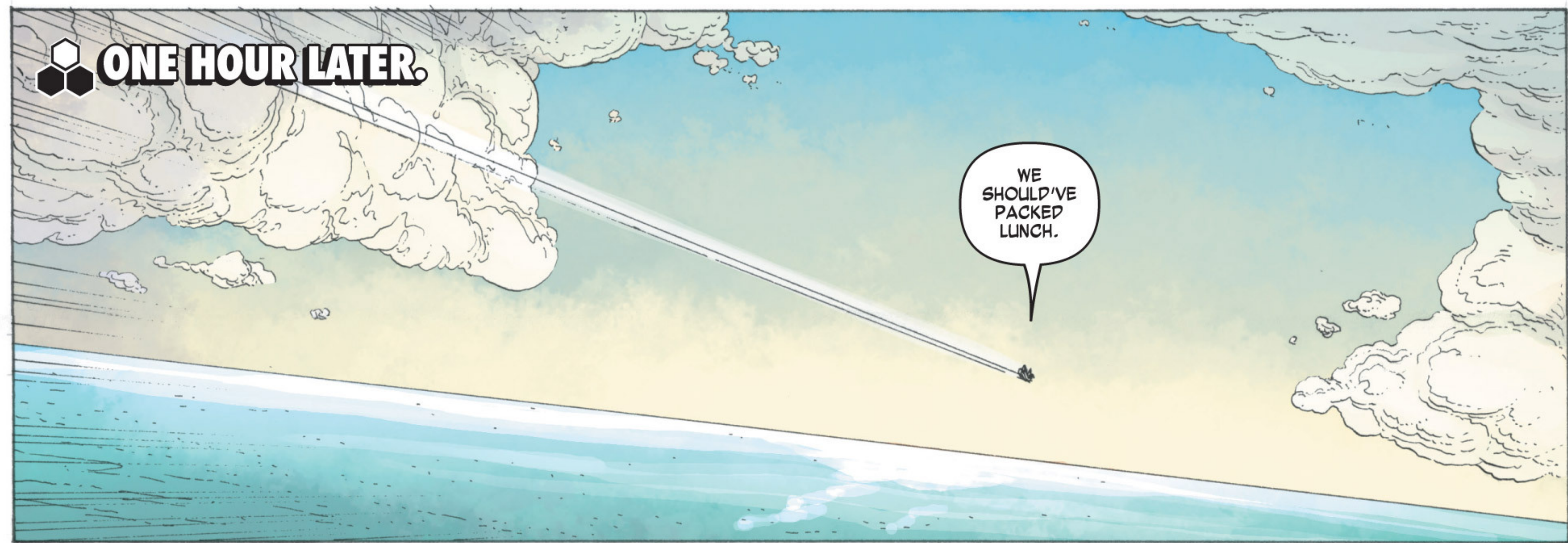
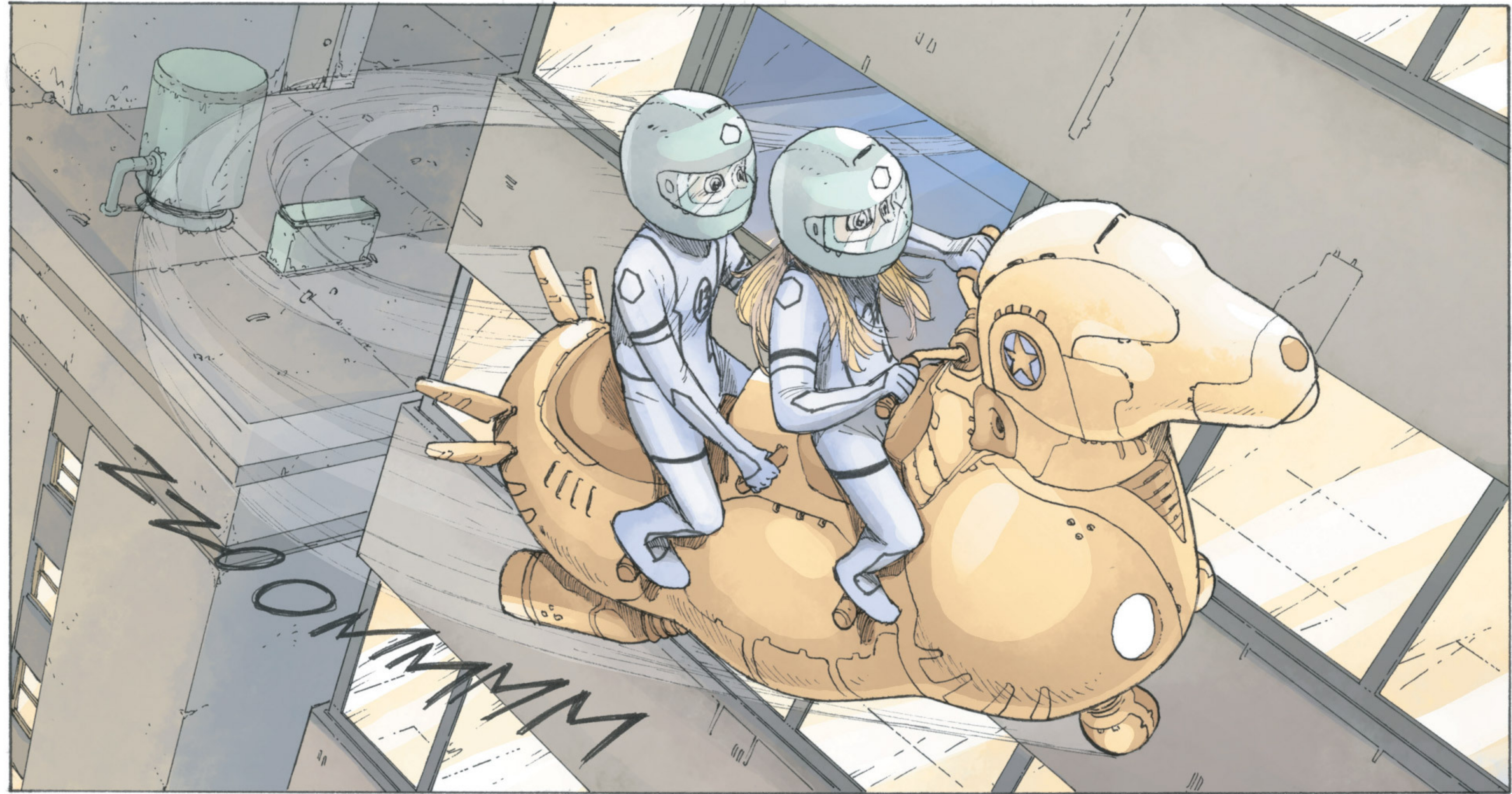
WHAT *IS*
THAT?

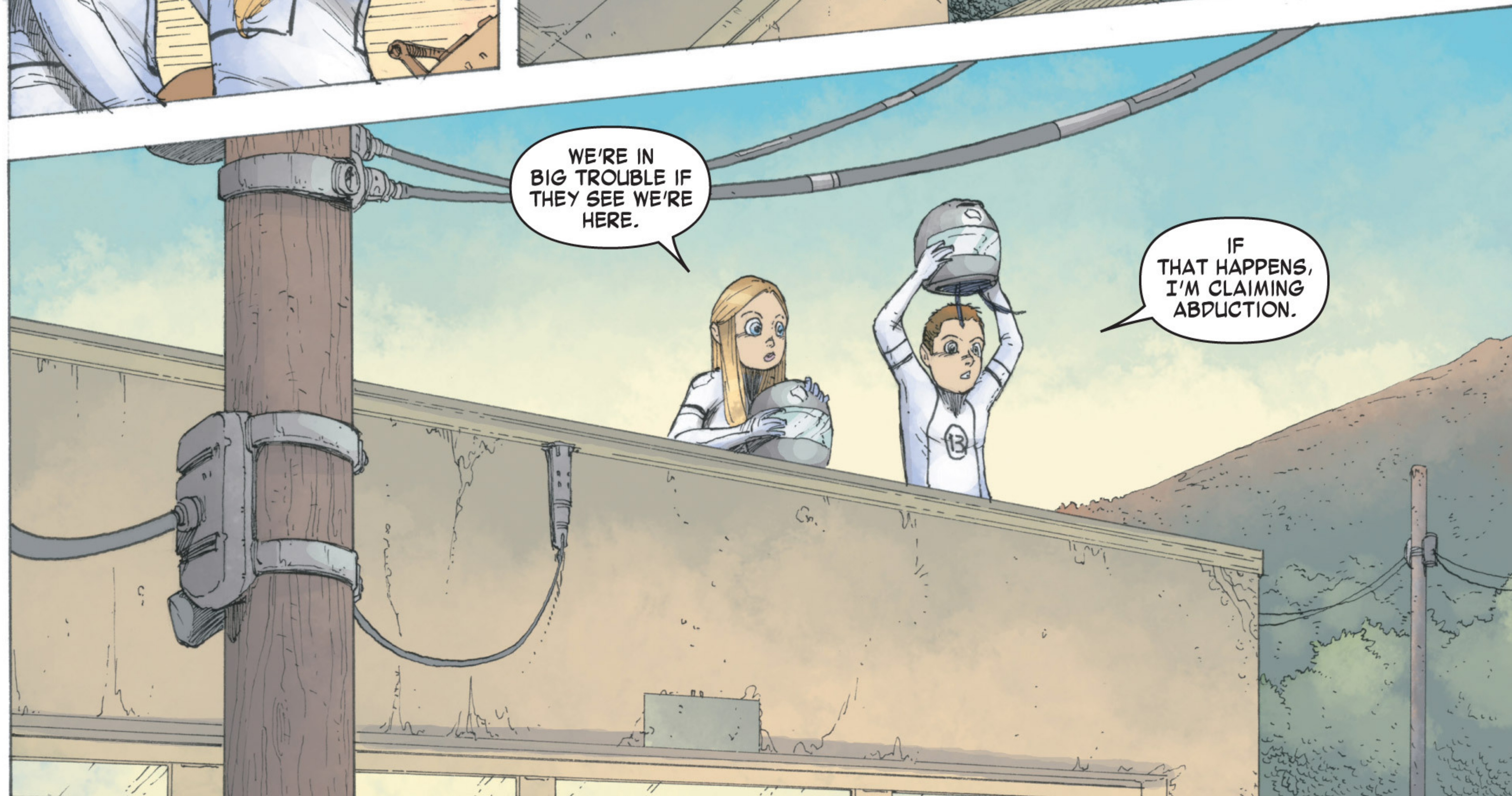
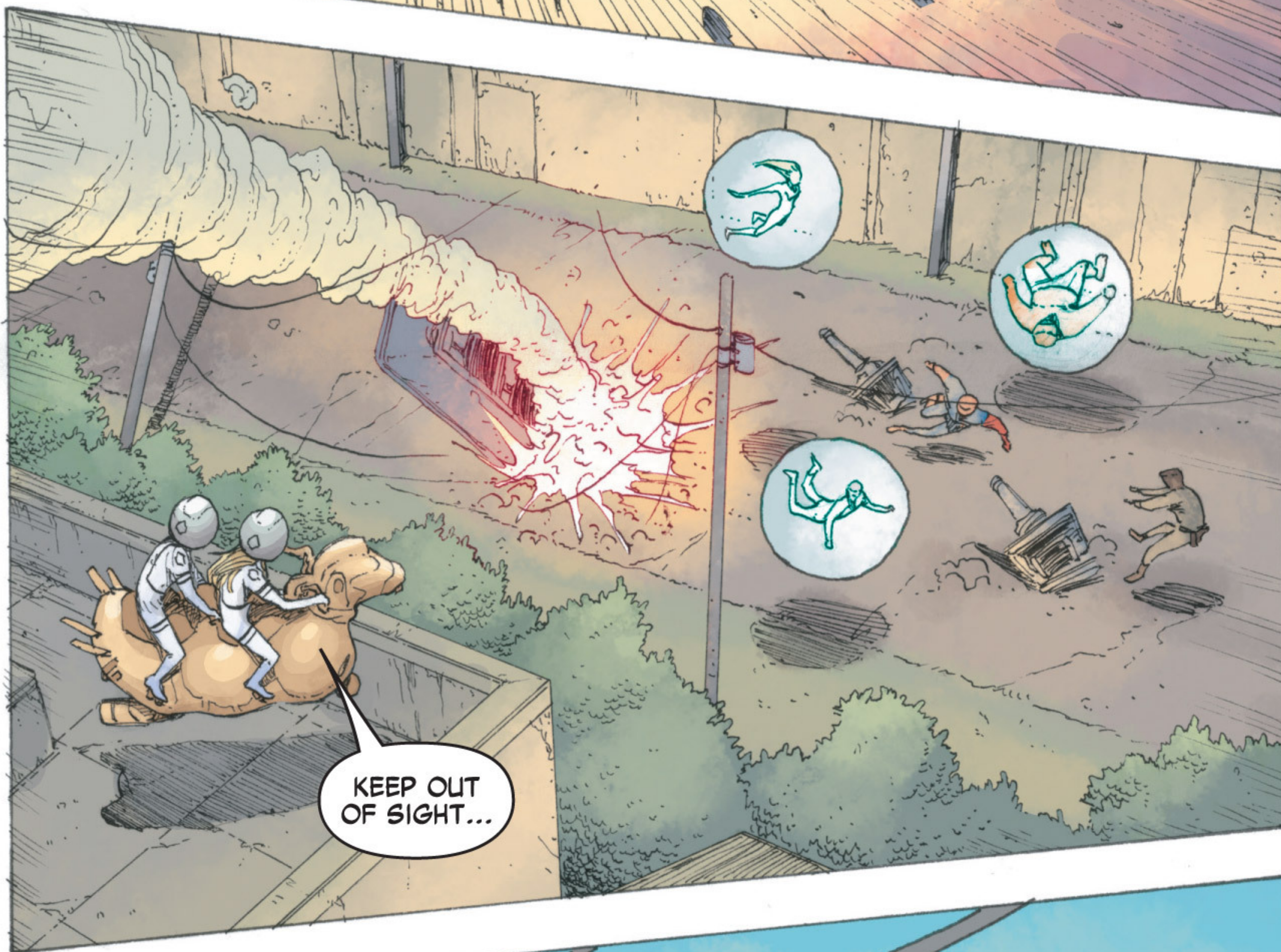
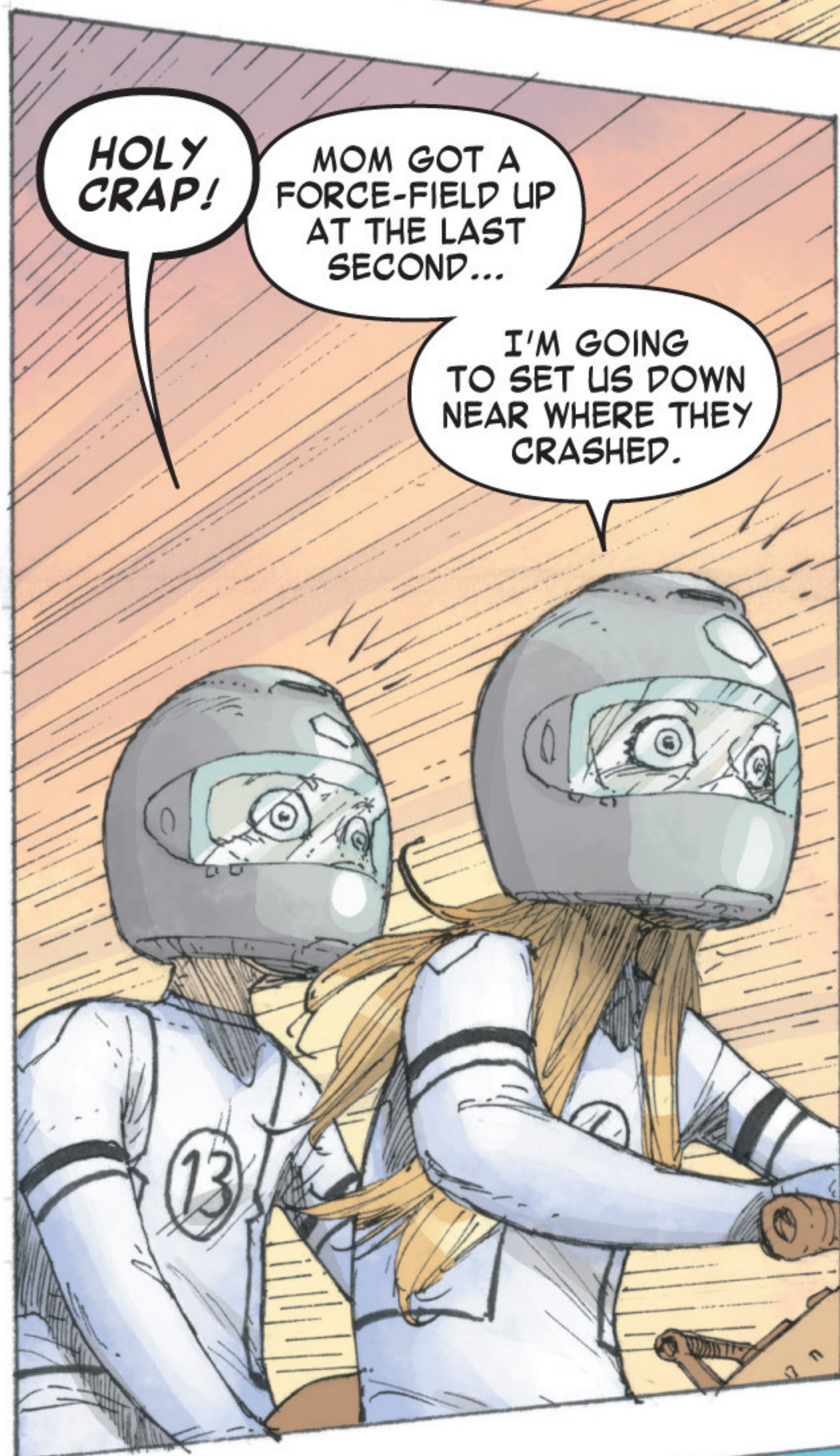
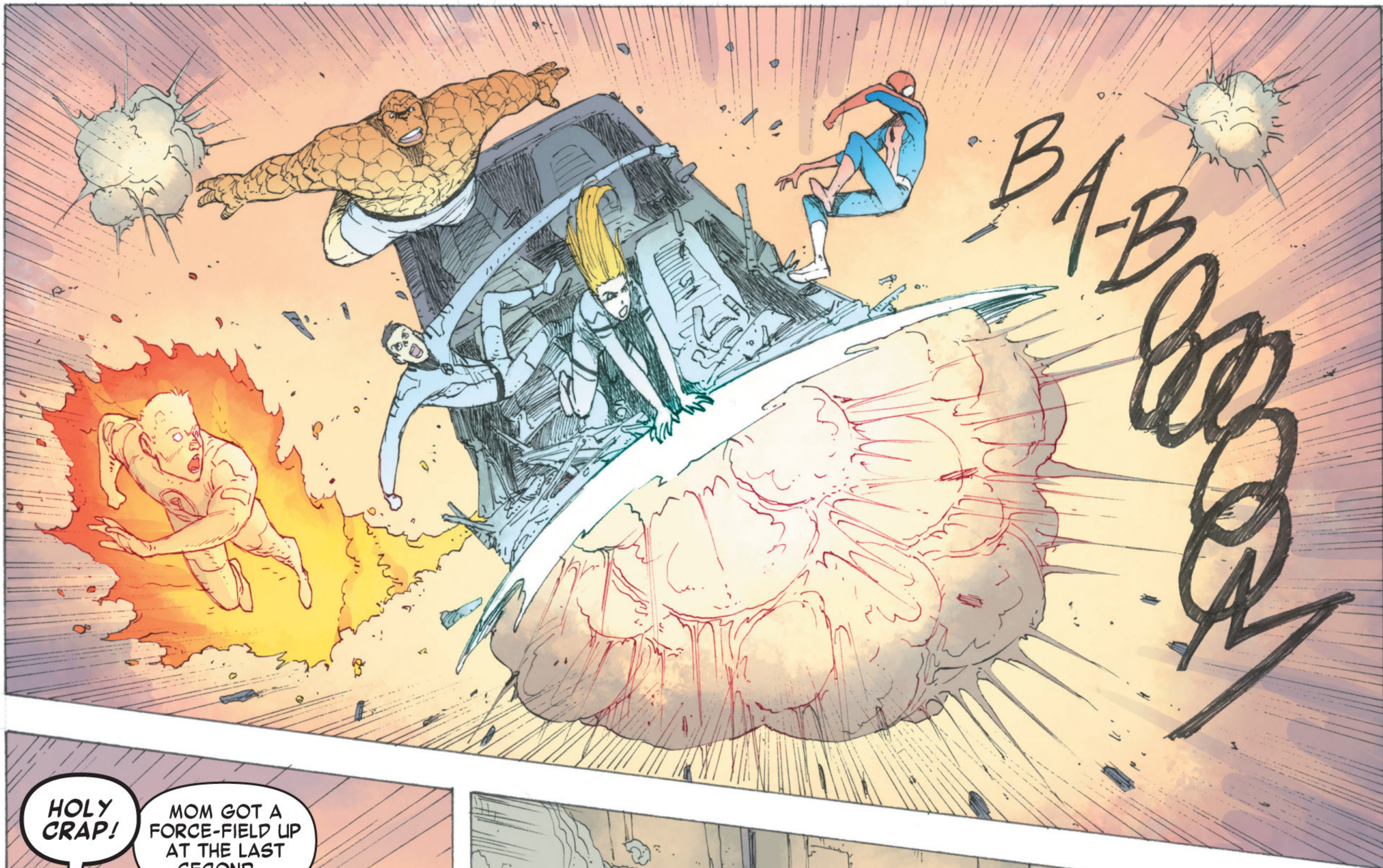


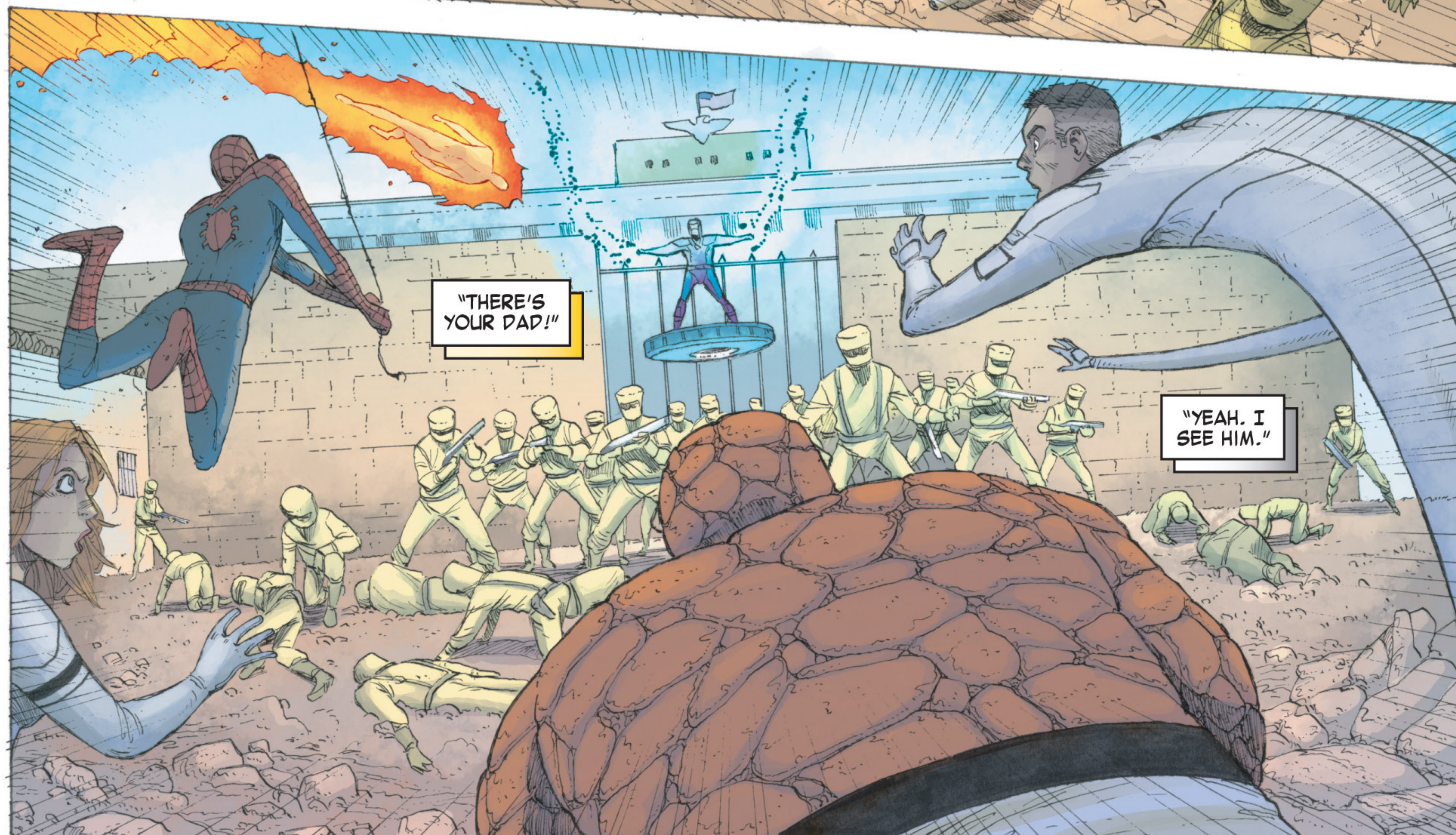
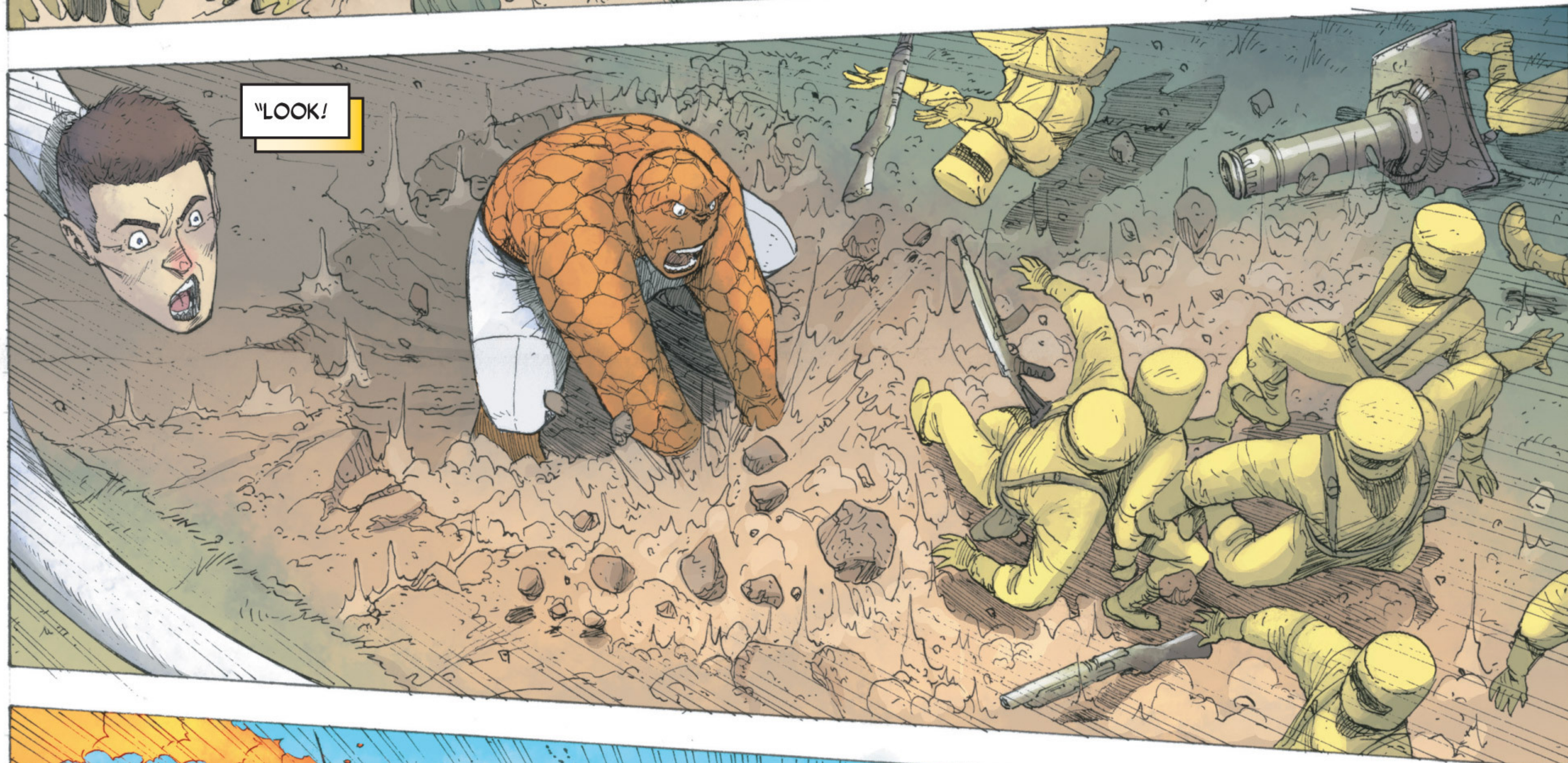
OH, I'VE GIVEN IT AN INDEPENDENT PROPULSION
SYSTEM, A TOP-OF-THE-LINE NAVIGATION
PACKAGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL
CONTROLS...

BUT THAT'S
STILL MY SAME
OLD HORSEY.

PUT
YOUR HELMET
ON.









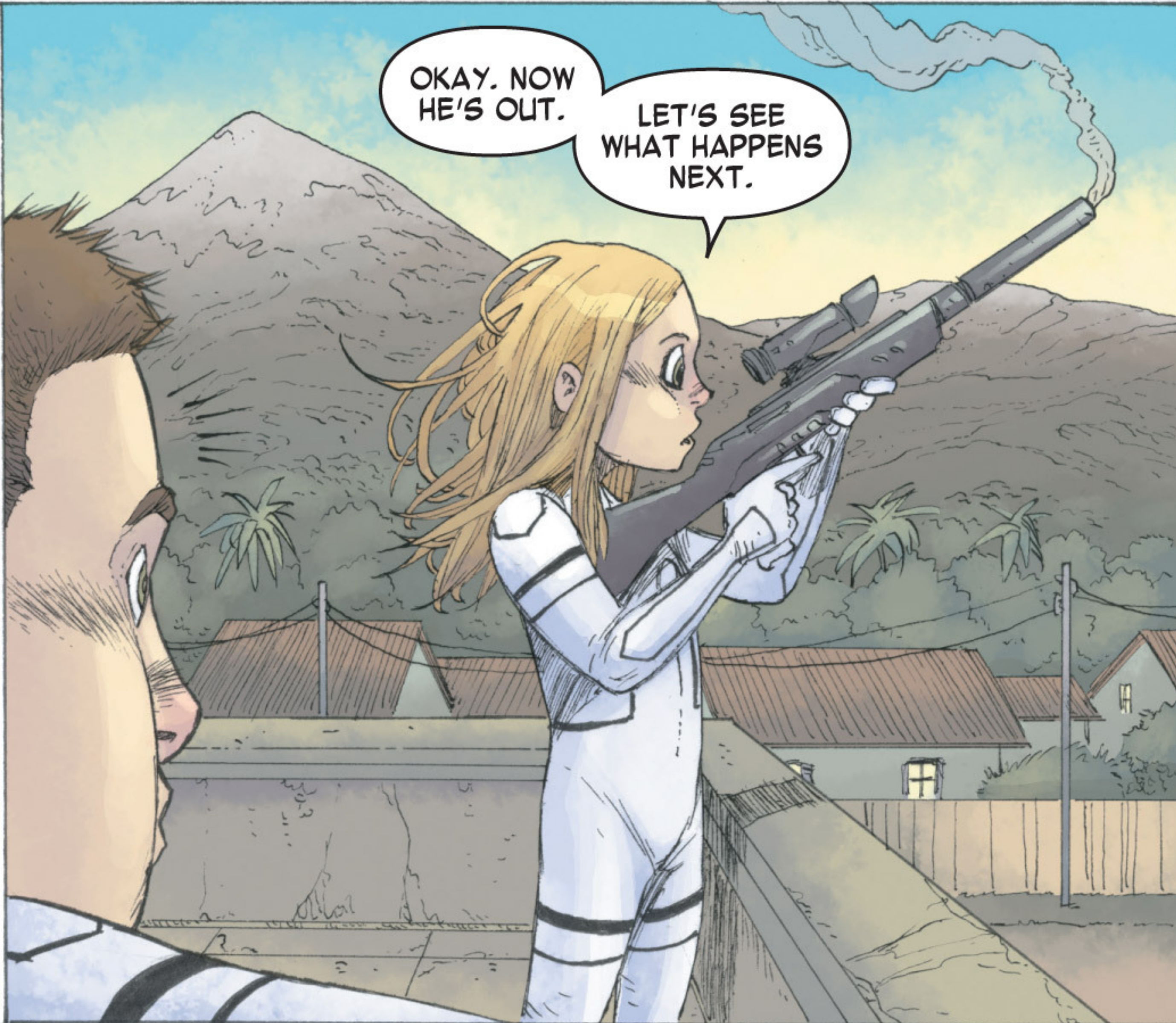
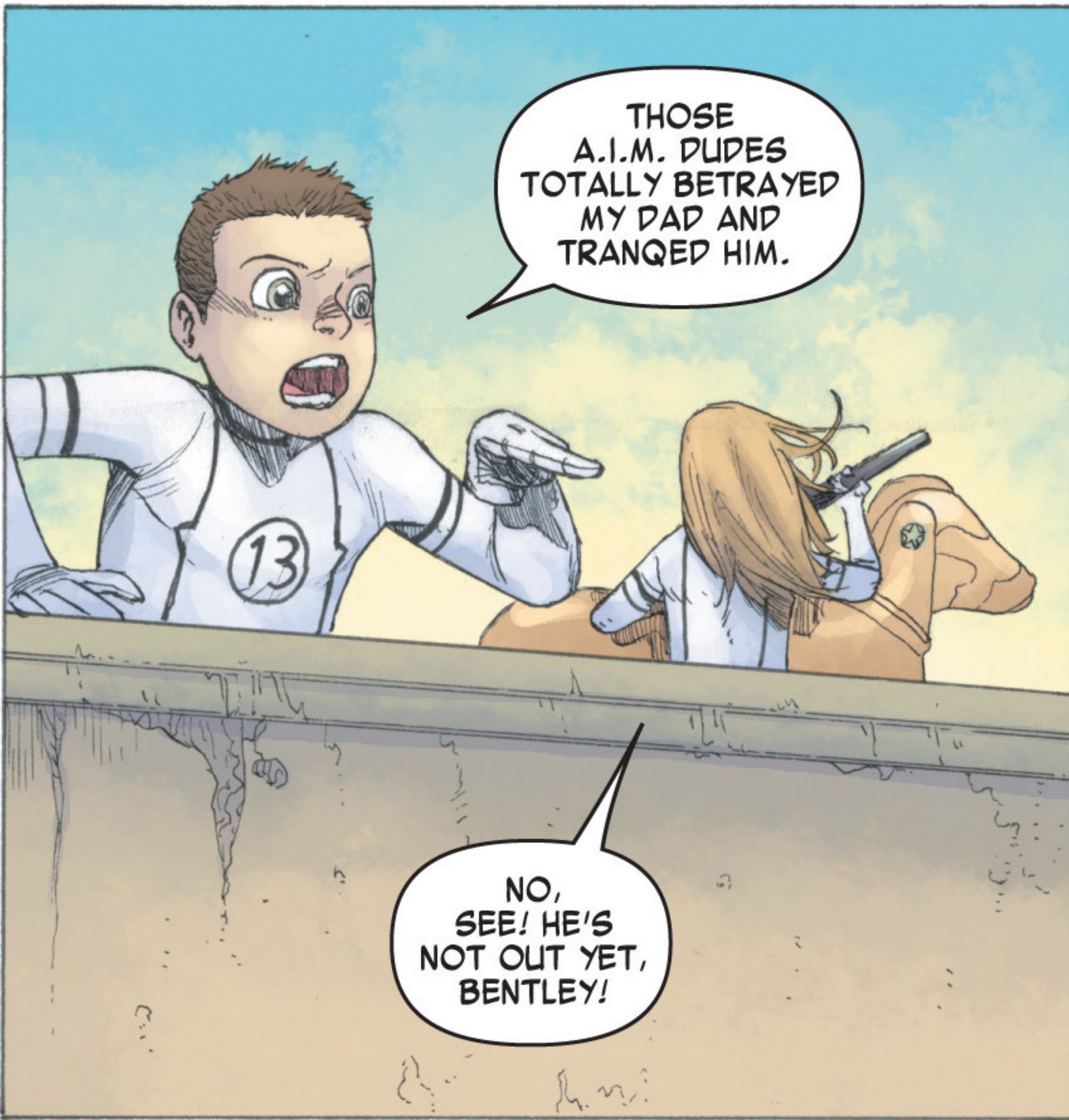
OPEN YOUR EYES, RICHARDS! THIS IS A WORLD WHERE **PROGRESS** MEANS GOING BACKWARDS.

SEE! THESE ARE NOT NEW DAYS, BUT DAYS OF OLD.

THIS IS NOT WRONGDOING, OR ILL INTENT--I DO NOT STRIKE AT YOUR BELIEFS...

I SMITE THEM.







SOOOOO...

WHAT
HAPPENED
NEXT?!



LATER.
THE BAXTER
BUILDING.

WELL,
QUITE A BIT,
ACTUALLY.

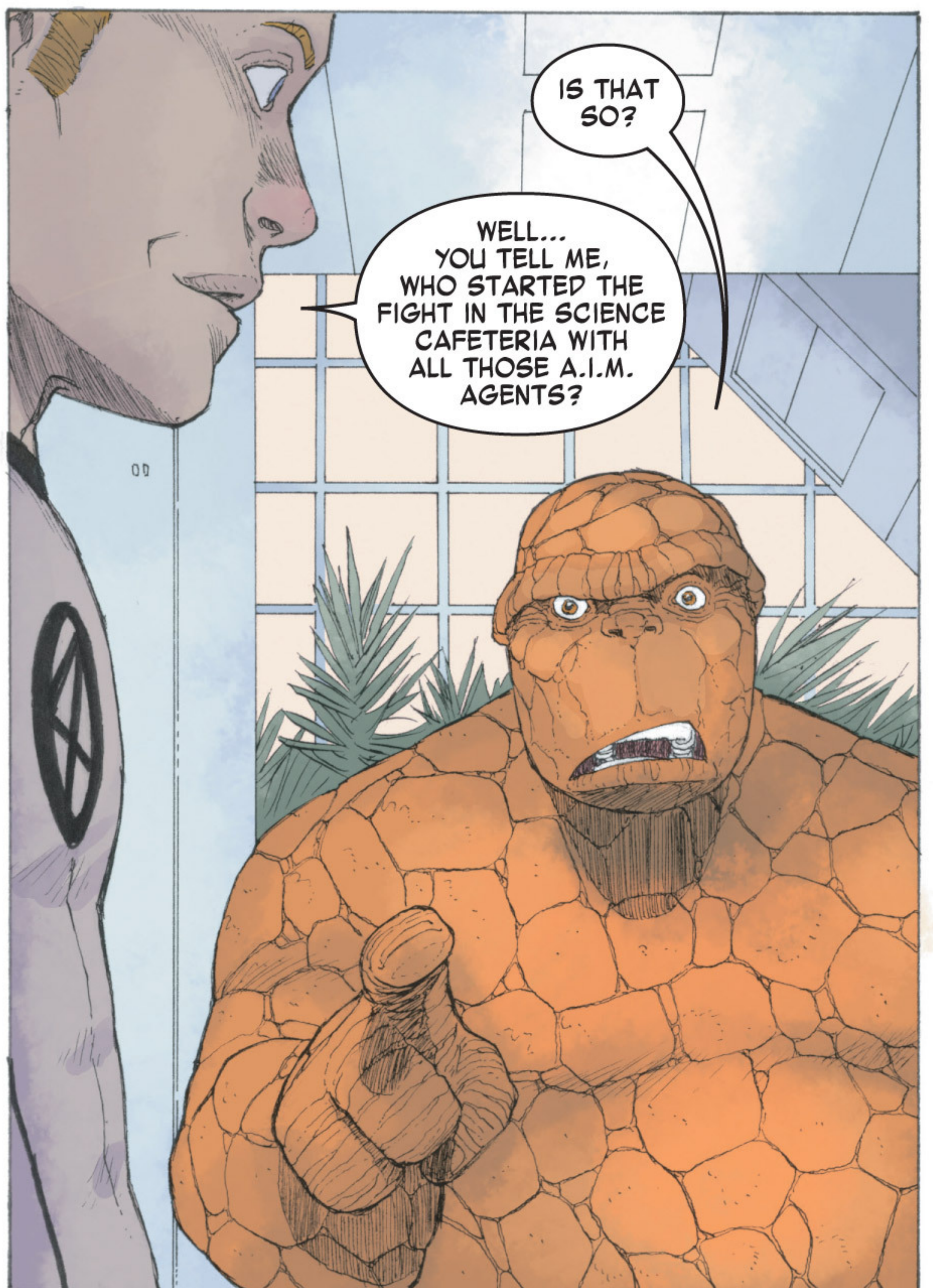


THERE WAS A
STALEMATE AND
THEN THE NEW HEAD
OF A.I.M. WANTED
TO MEET WITH
REED...

WHO, COME
TO FIND OUT, HAD
BEEN NAMED THE U.S.
AMBASSADOR TO
A.I.M. ISLAND BY
THE PRESIDENT.

RIGHT. AND THEN
EVERYTHING WENT
SIDWAYS.

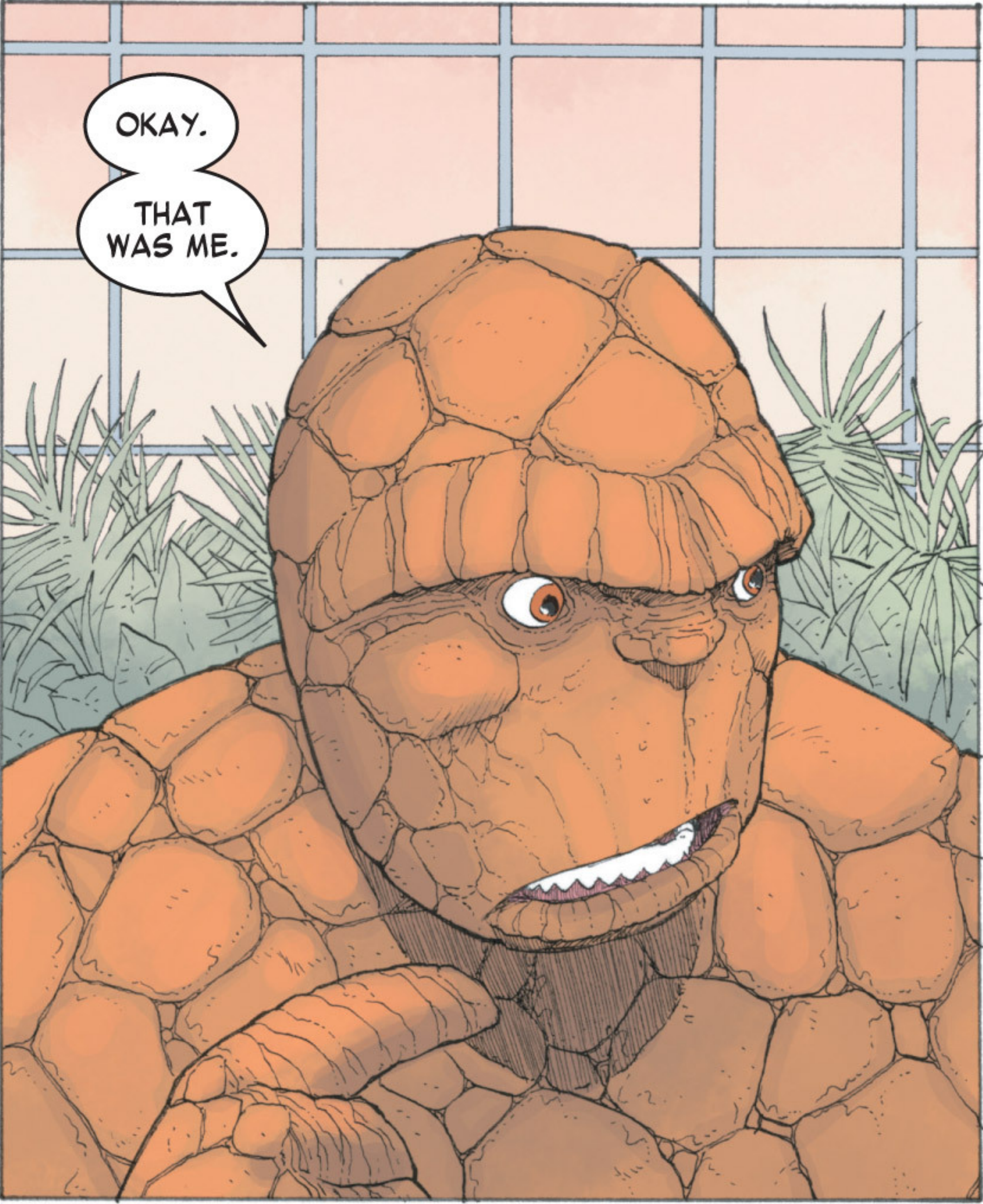
THANKFULLY,
I WAS THERE TO
MAKE SURE EVERYTHING
WORKED OUT.



IS THAT
SO?

WELL...
YOU TELL ME,
WHO STARTED THE
FIGHT IN THE SCIENCE
CAFETERIA WITH
ALL THOSE A.I.M.
AGENTS?





OKAY.
THAT
WAS ME.



AND THEN
YOU CRUSHED
THEM!

THE MIGHTY
BEN.

BEN,
WHOSE
BRAWN BEATS
SCIENCE.

BEN!
WHAT TIME
IS IT?



IT'S
CLOBBER!--
MRUPHF!

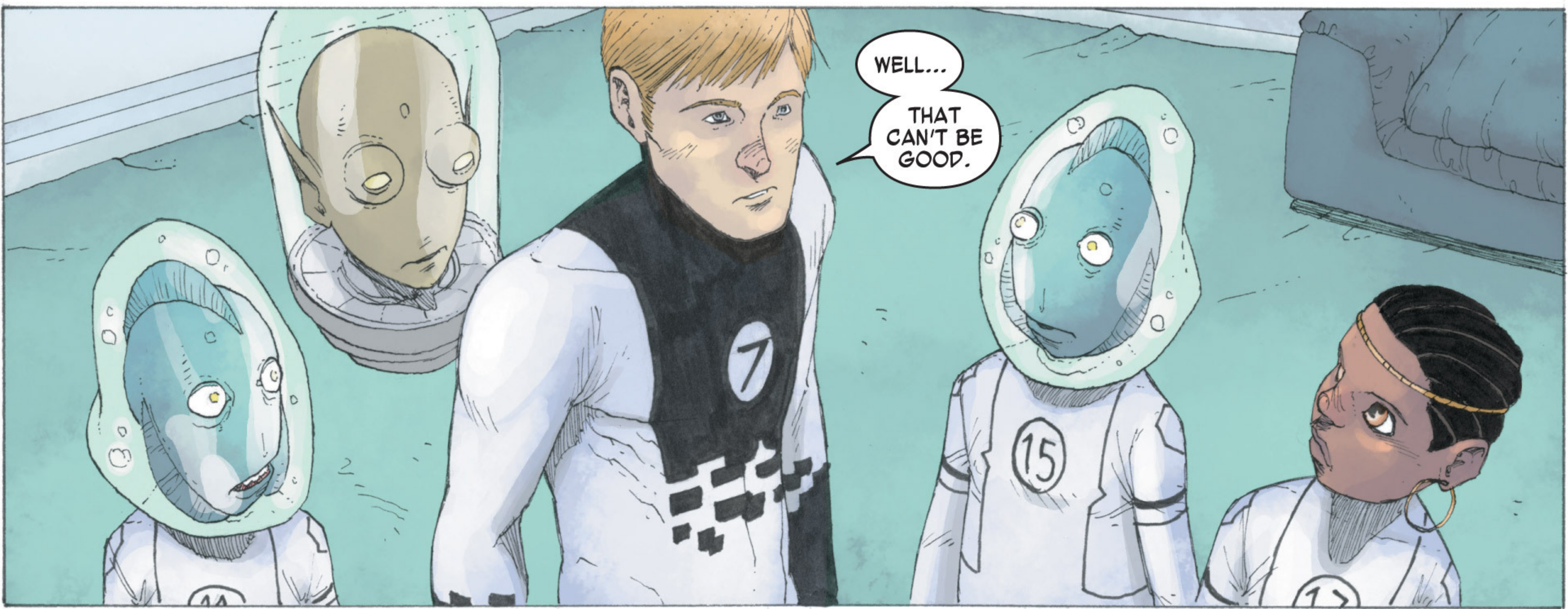
ACTUALLY,
IT WASN'T.



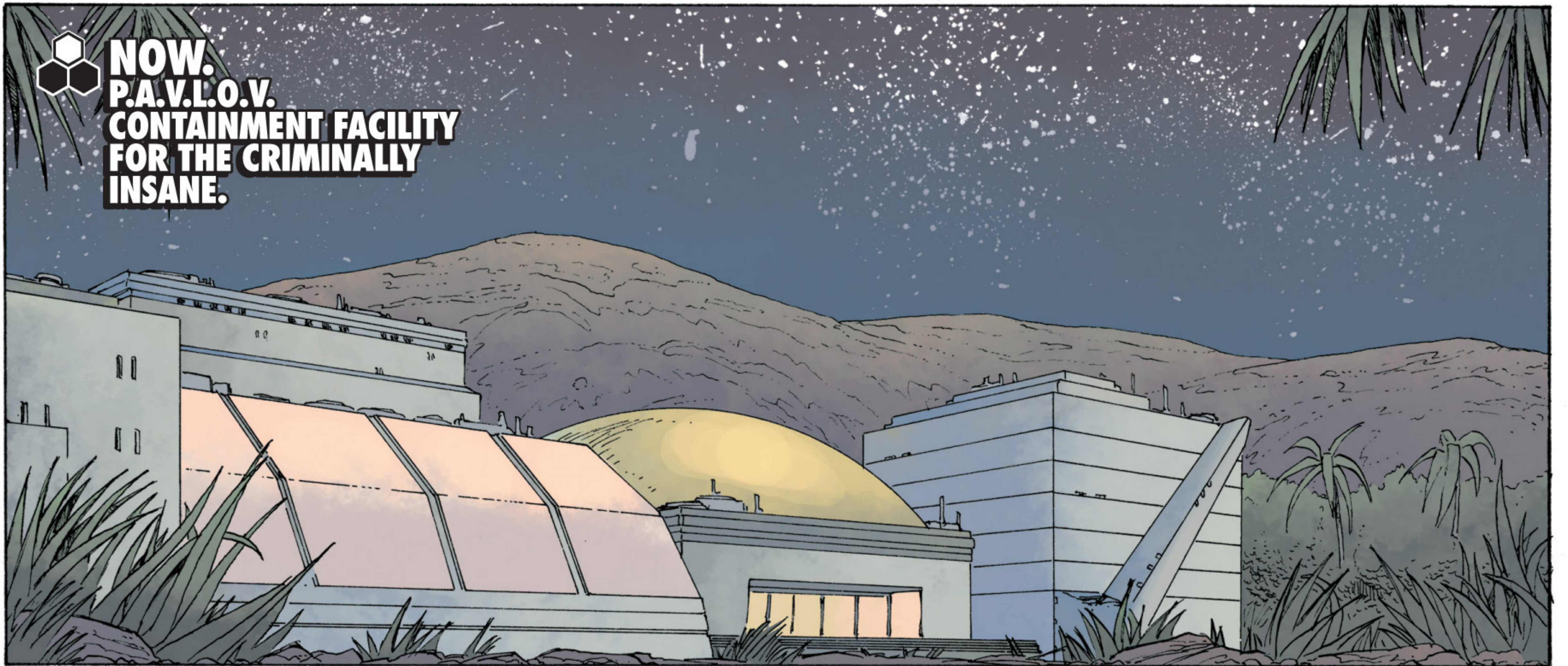
SEE, THOSE
GUYS AT A.I.M. ISLAND
WERE PLAYING A MUCH LONGER
GAME AND SO A TREATY--A
BLADY BLAH BLAH WHATEVER--
WAS STRUCK BY REED BETWEEN
THE U.S. AND A.I.M.

AND IN
RETURN, THE
WIZARD WOULD BE
TURNED OVER TO
U.S. CUSTODY...

WHICH IS
WHAT REED, VAL
AND BENTLEY ARE
SEEING TO RIGHT
NOW.



WELL...
THAT
CAN'T BE
GOOD.

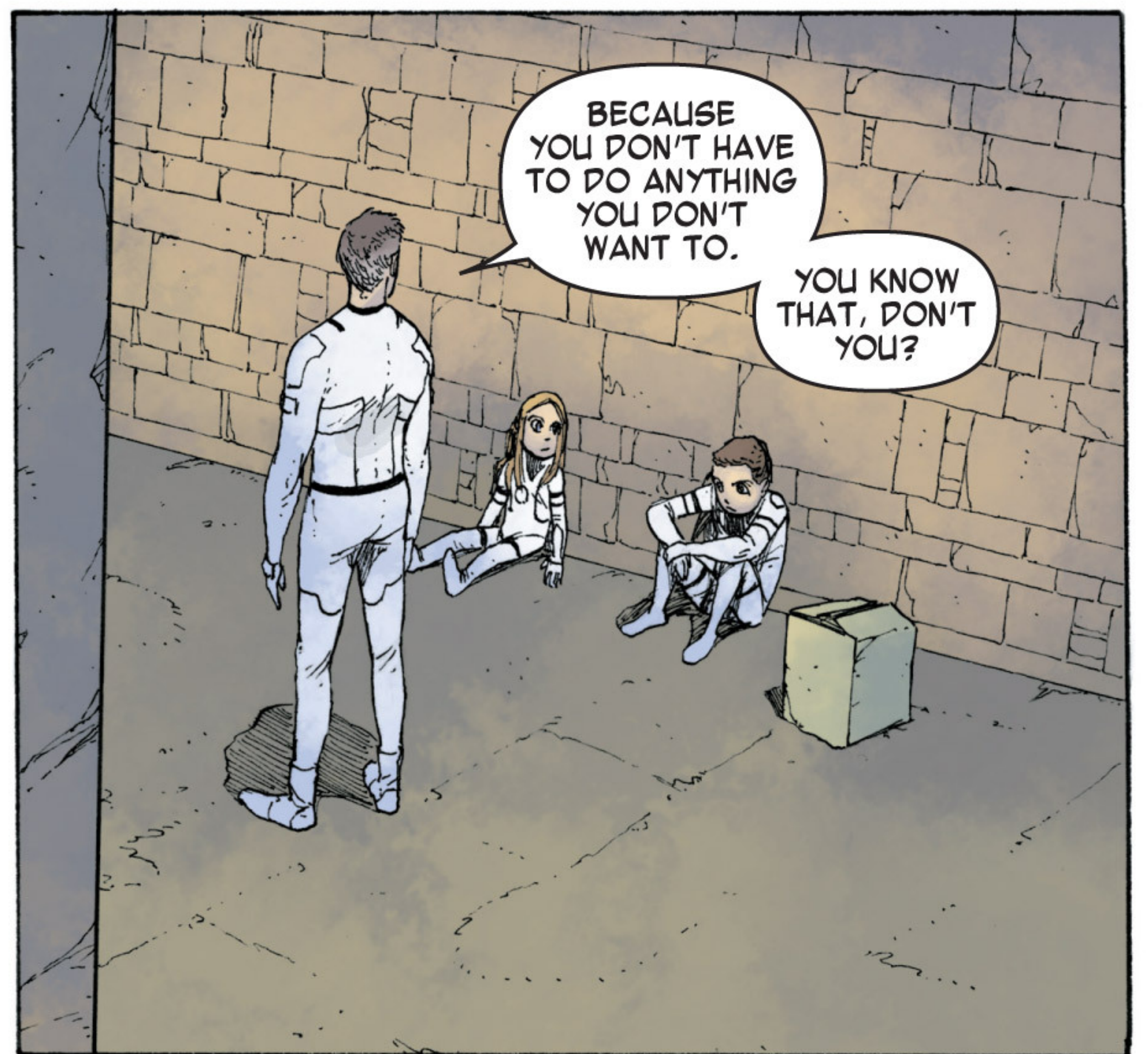


NOW.
P.A.V.L.O.V.
CONTAINMENT FACILITY
FOR THE CRIMINALLY
INSANE.



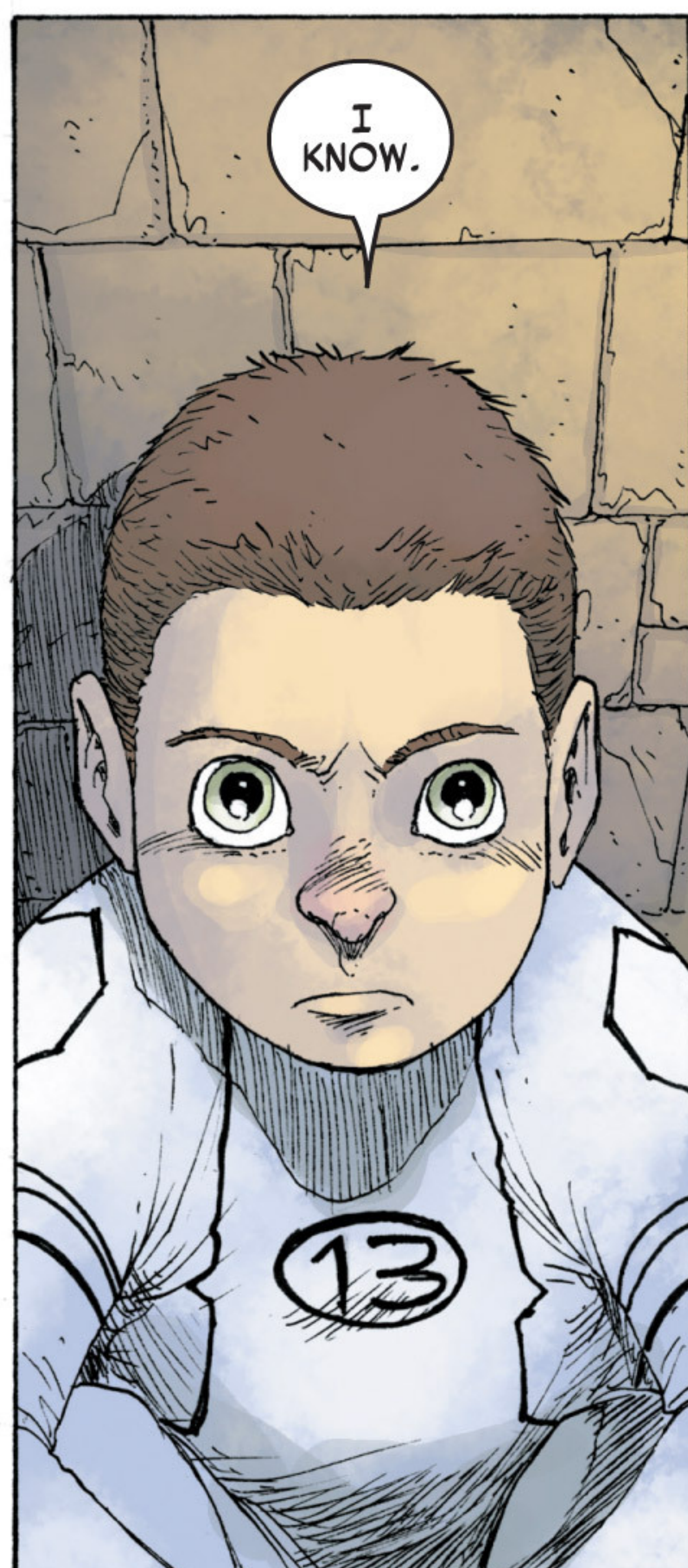
I'M
GOING TO GO
IN AND TALK TO
HIM NOW.

ARE YOU
SURE YOU WANT
TO DO THIS?

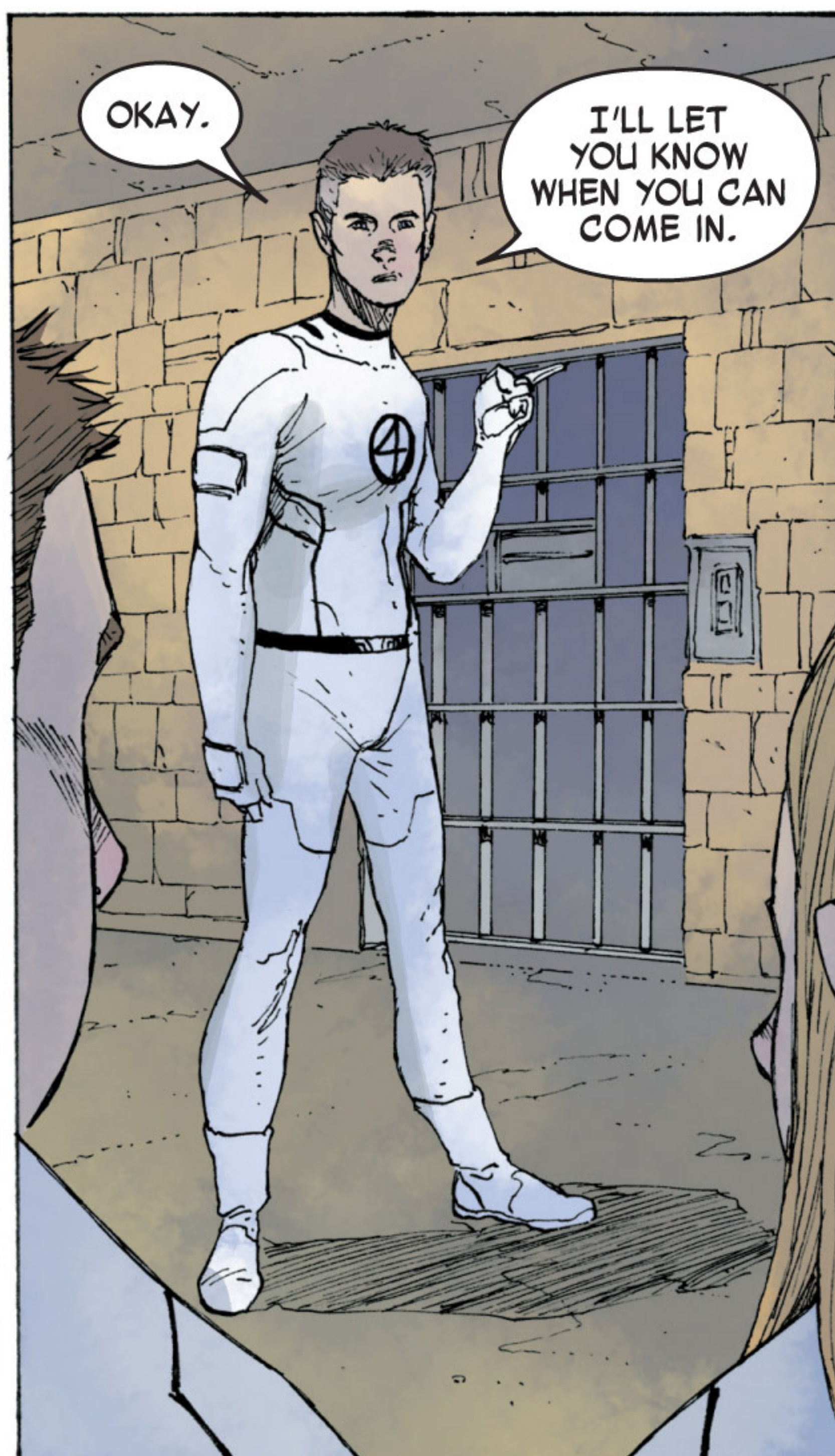


BECAUSE
YOU DON'T HAVE
TO DO ANYTHING
YOU DON'T
WANT TO.

YOU KNOW
THAT, DON'T
YOU?



I
KNOW.

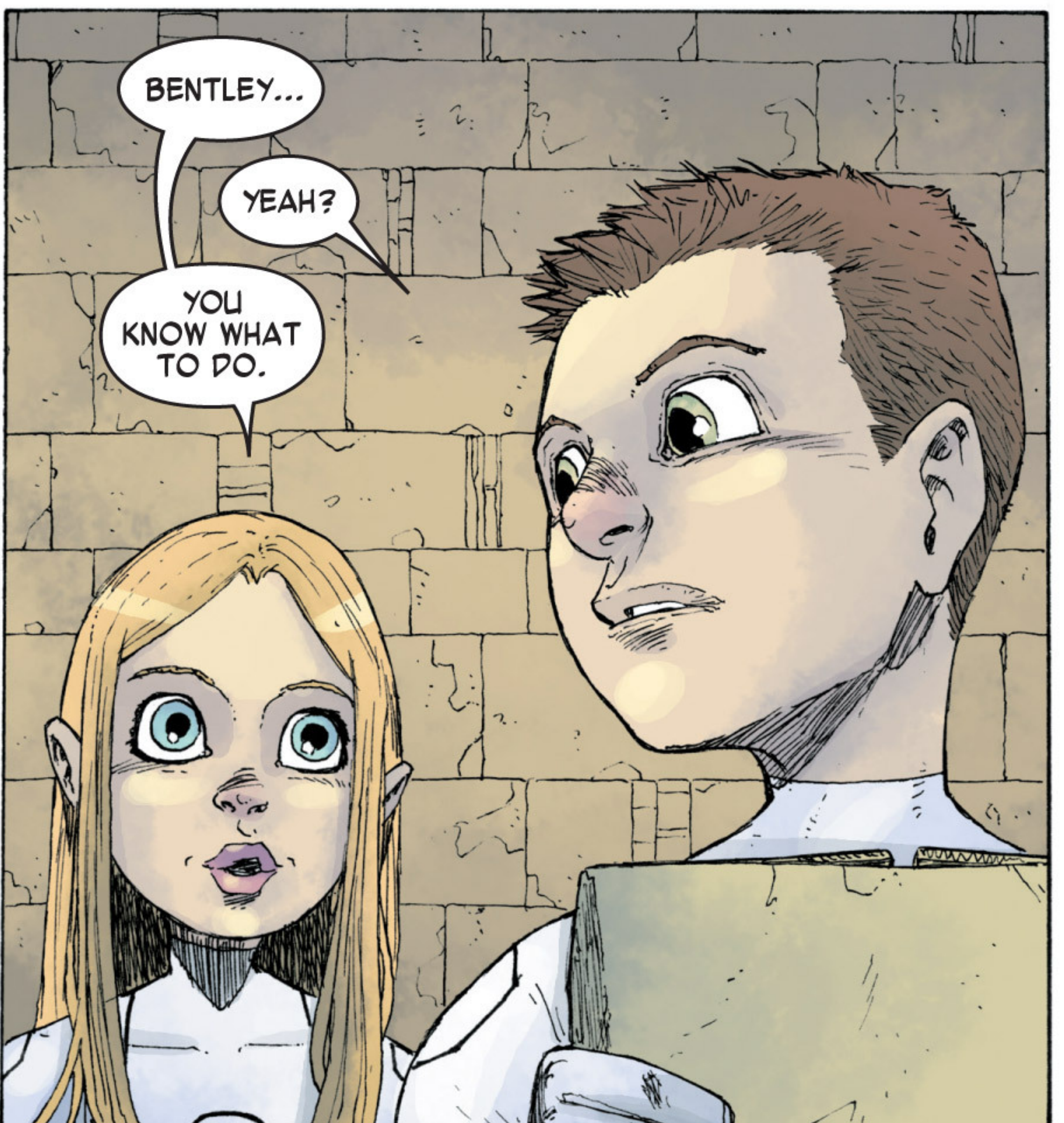
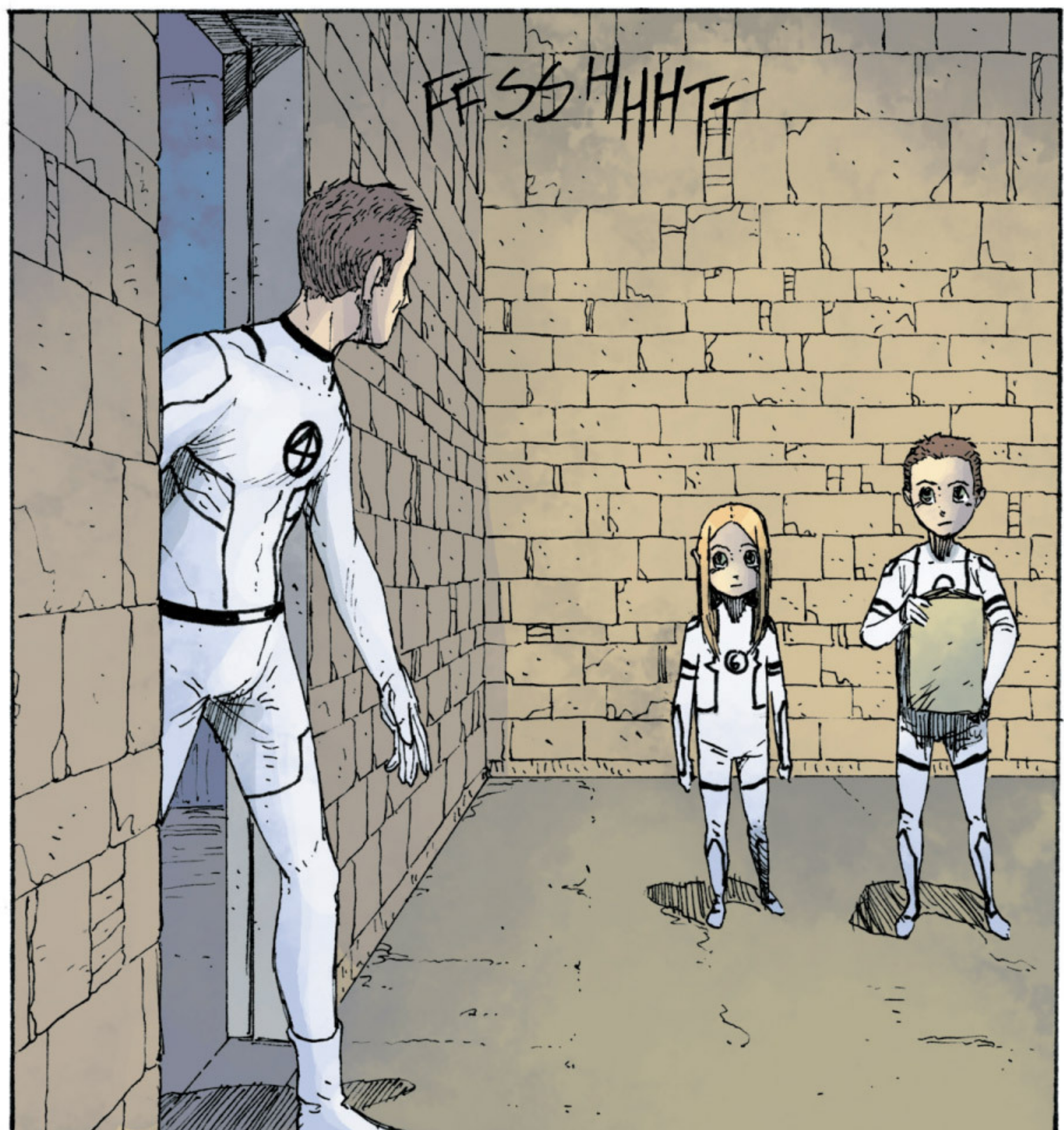
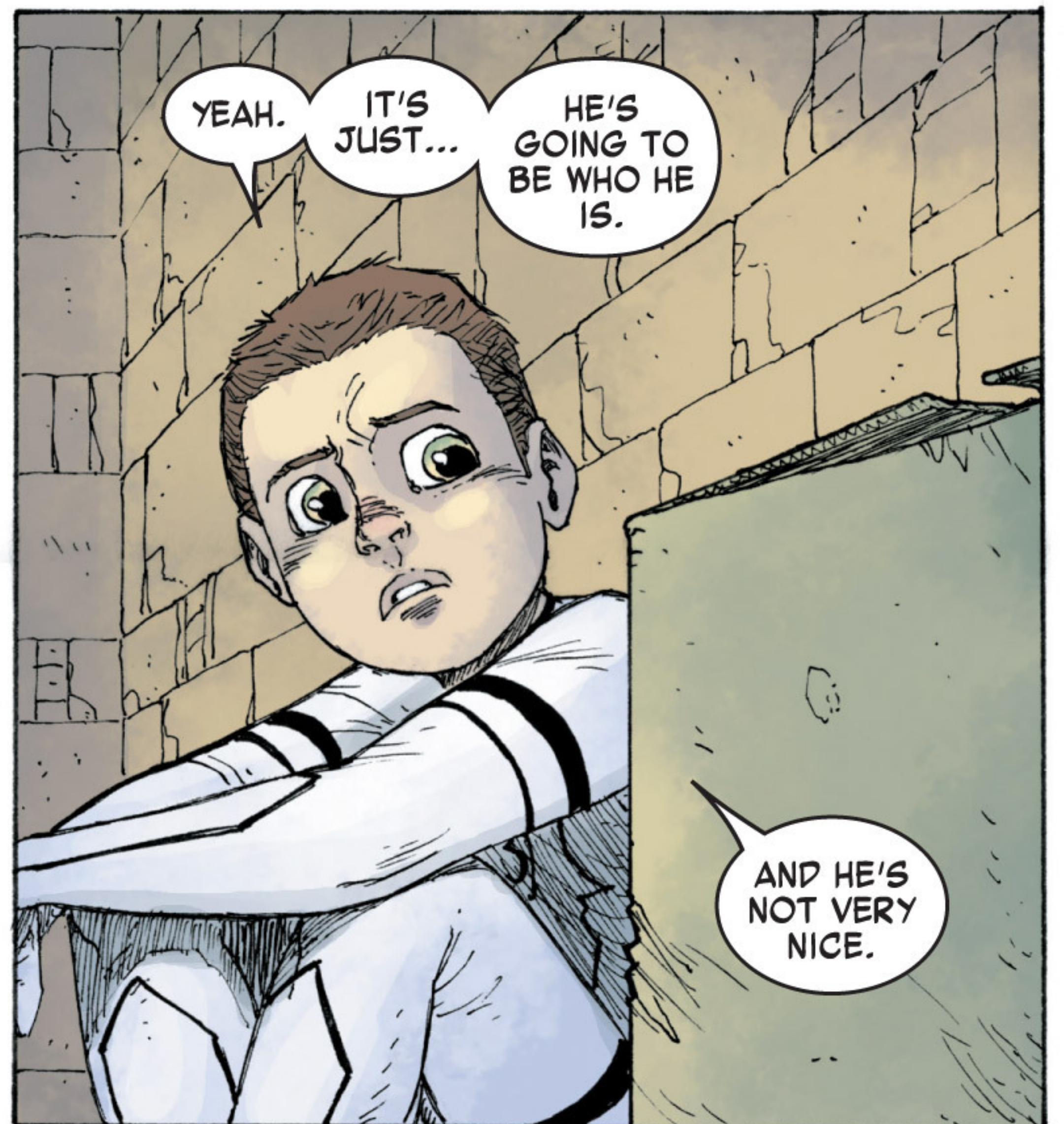
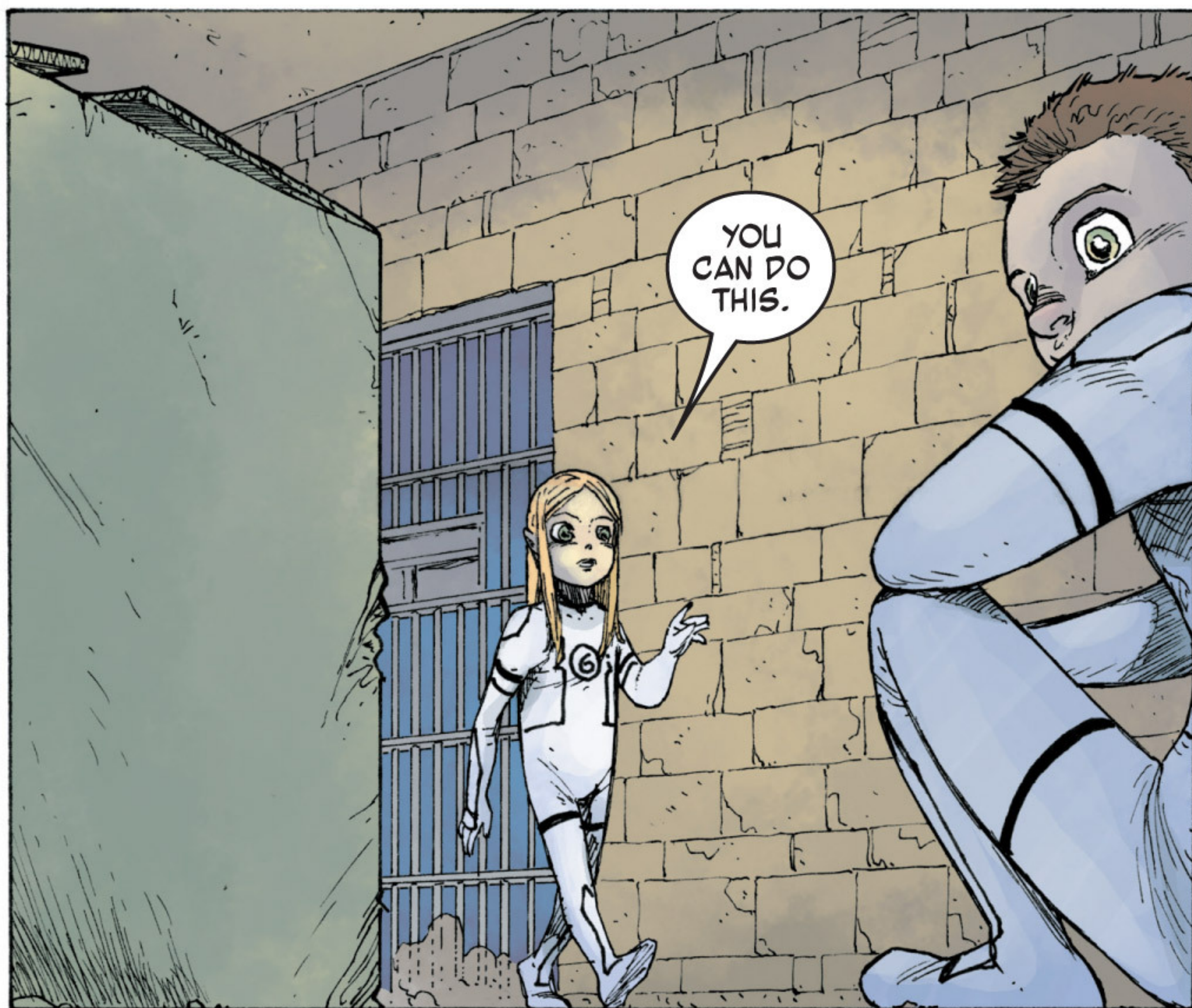


OKAY.

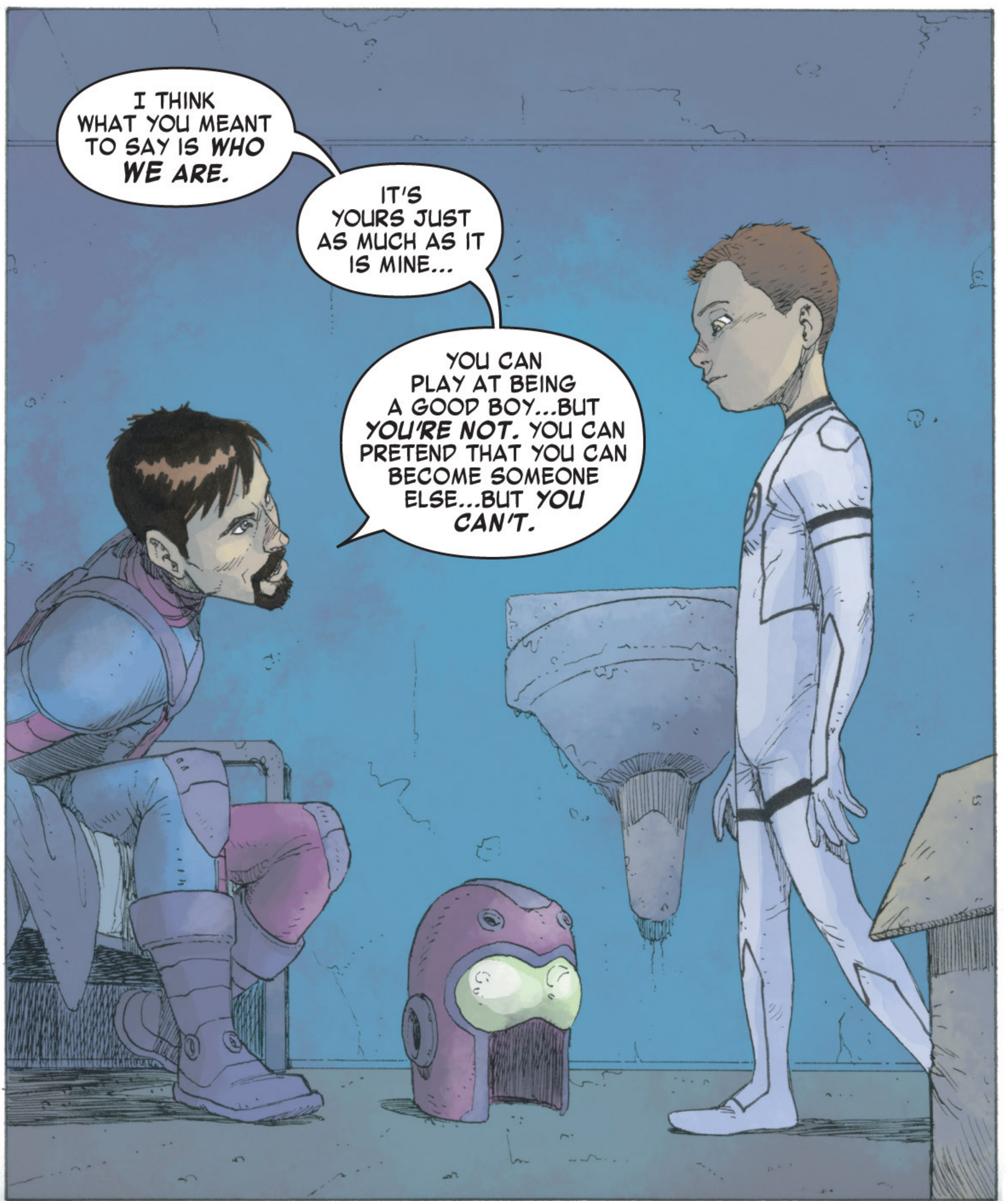
I'LL LET
YOU KNOW
WHEN YOU CAN
COME IN.



FFSSHHHTT









NO.
I DON'T WANT
TO.

I
DON'T WEAR
HELMETS.



I DO...
SO YOU
DO.

EVERY
IDEA YOU'VE
EVER HAD...

EVERY LITTLE
THOUGHT...

I
PUT THEM
THERE.



UNDERSTAND,
BOY?

I MADE
YOU.



I MADE
YOU OUT OF
NOTHING.

EVERY
MAN HAS A
GOD...

EVERY
SINGLE ONE.

AND I AM
YOURS!

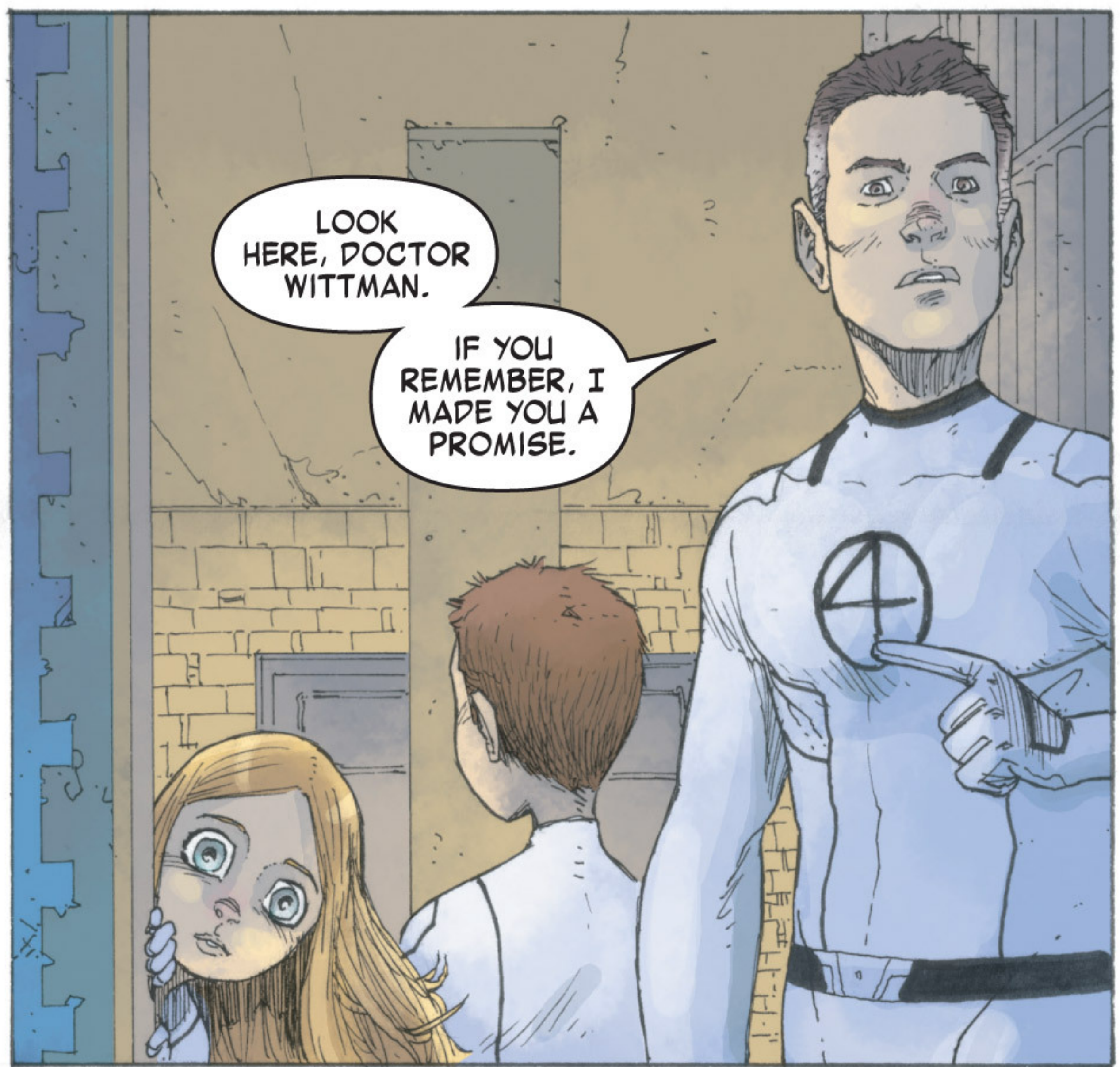


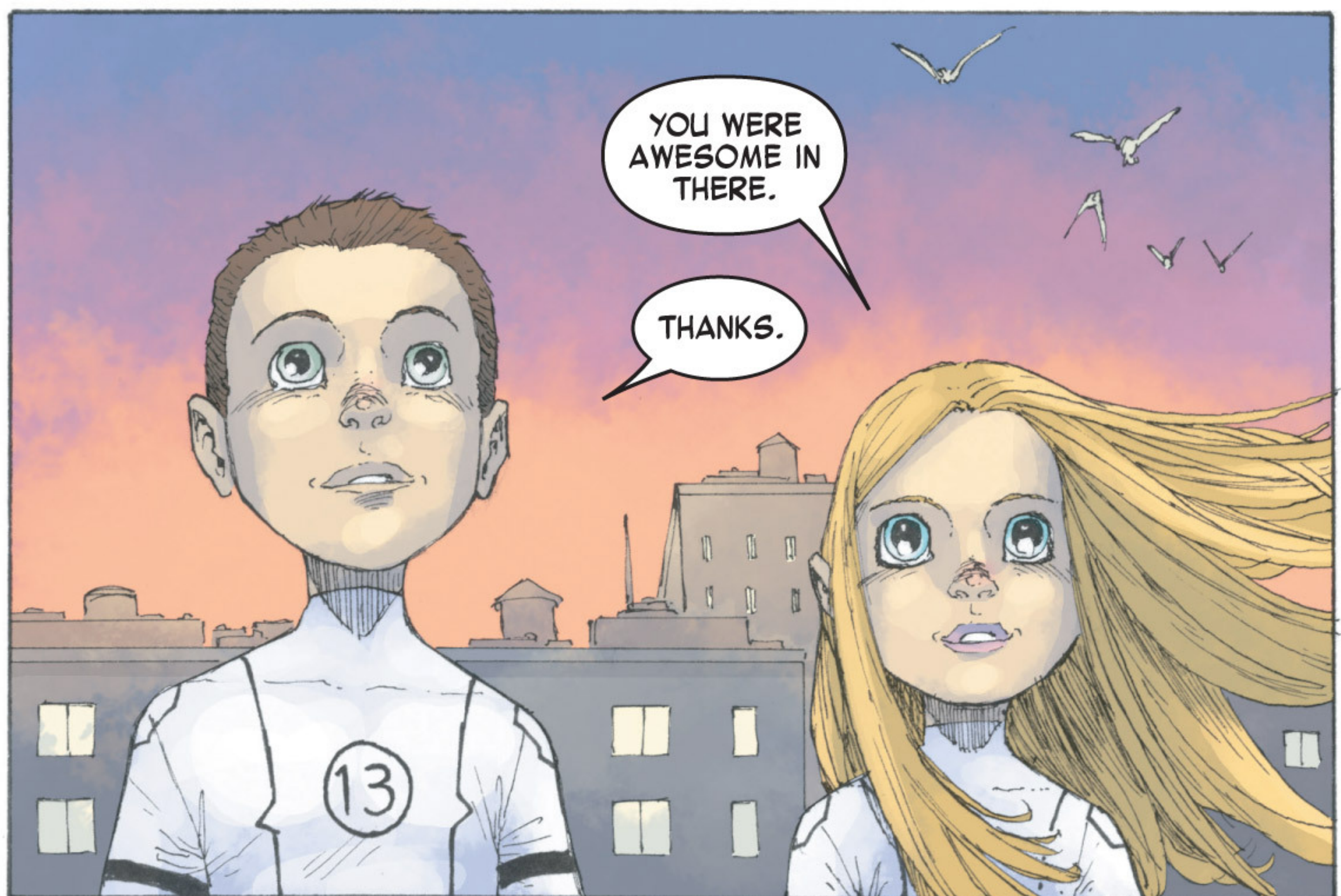
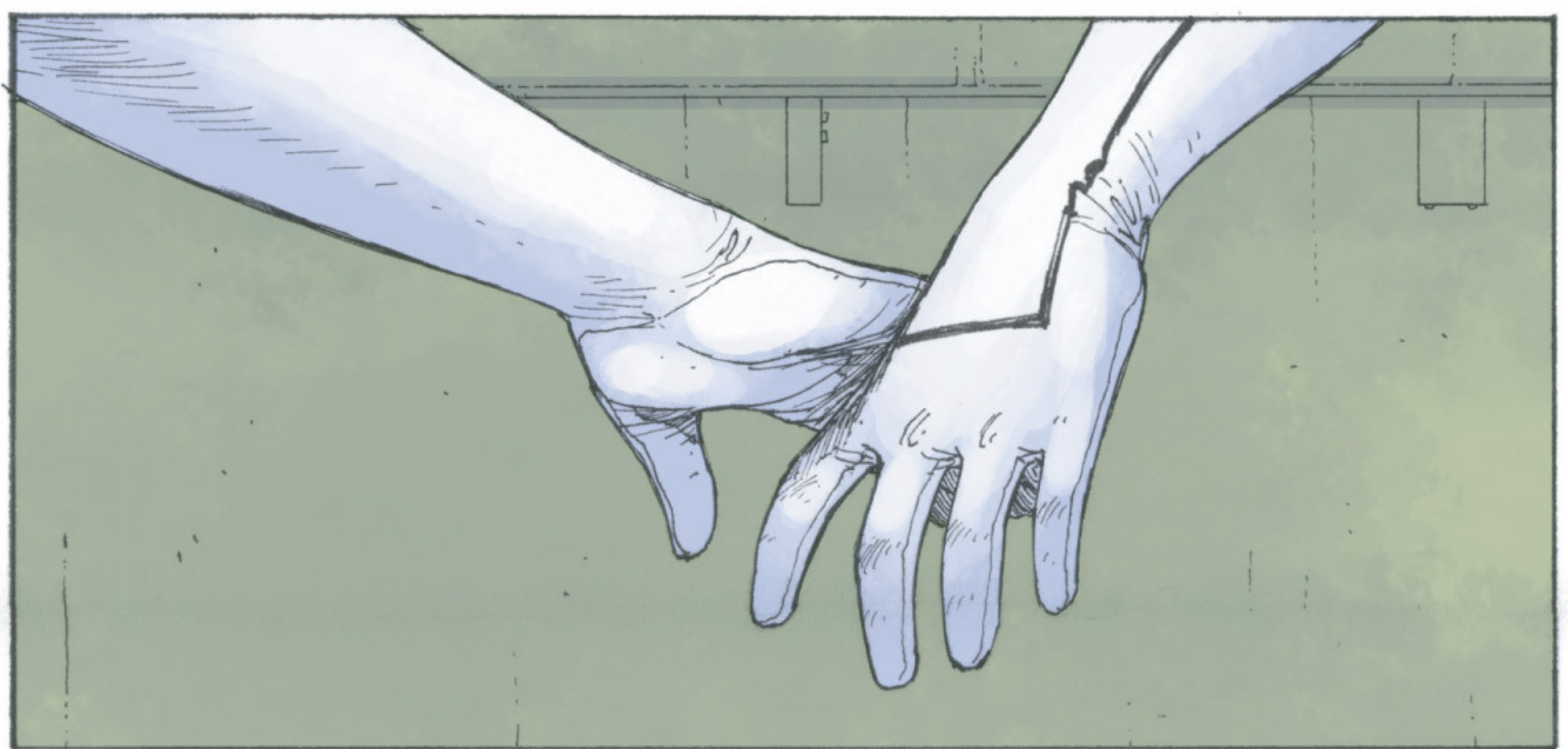
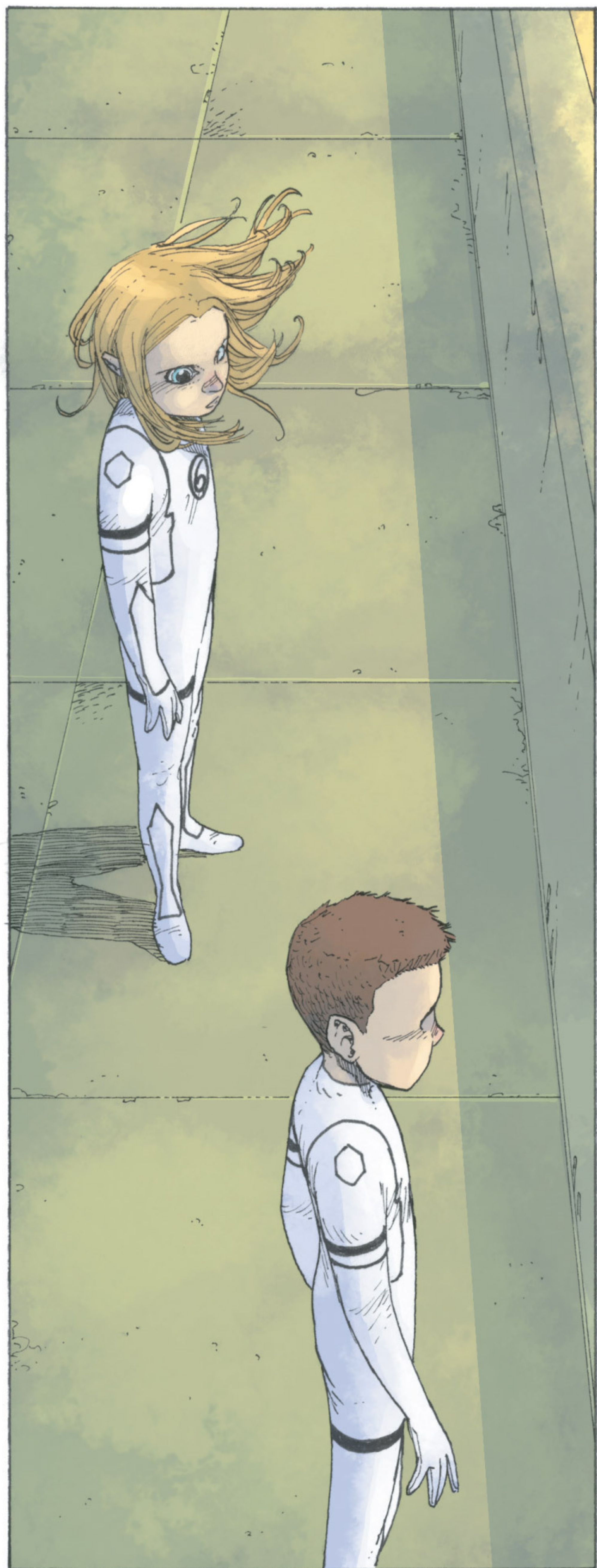
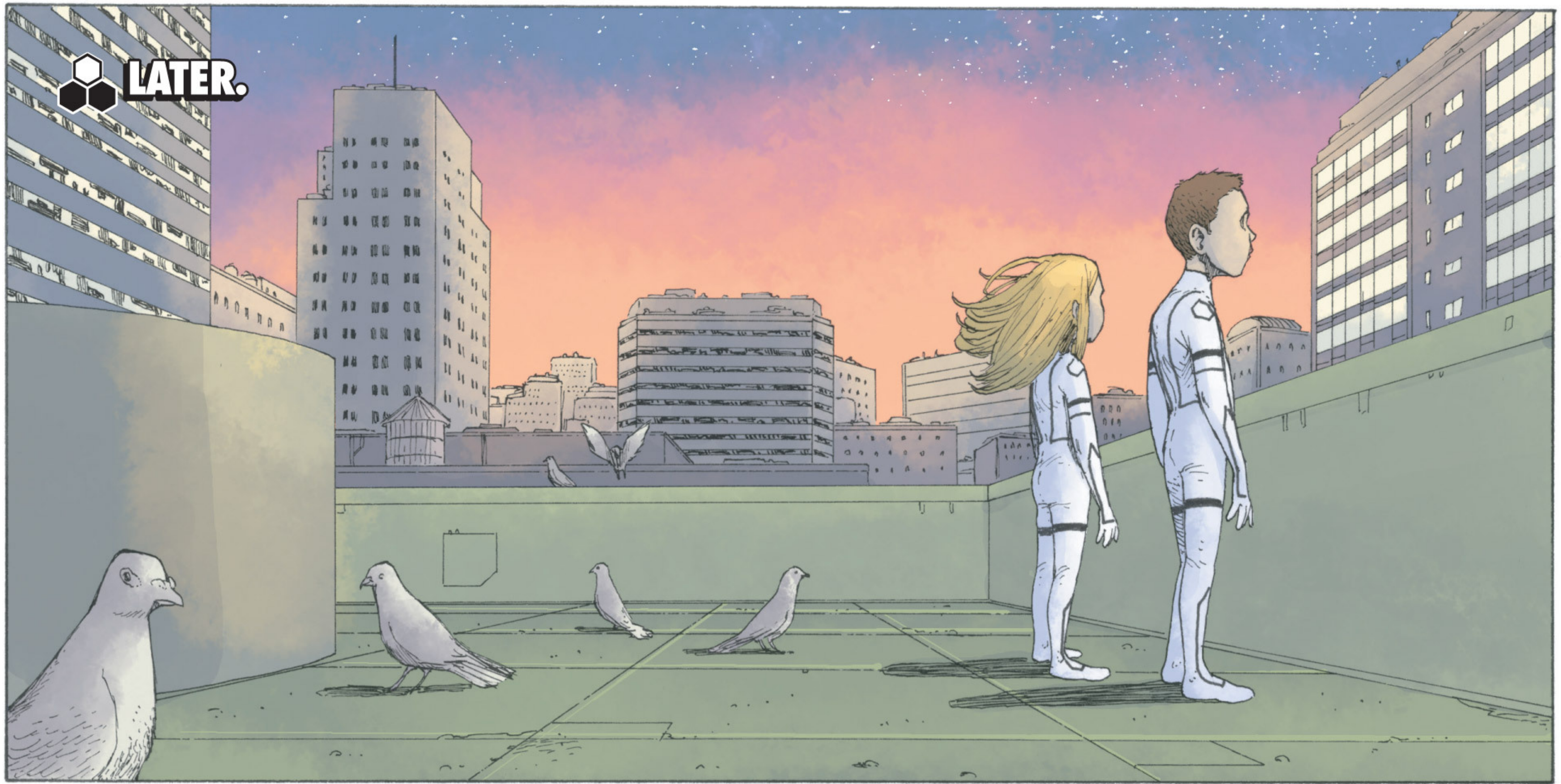
NOW I
COMMAND
YOU TO PUT
ON THAT HELMET
AND BECOME
WHAT YOU WERE
MEANT TO
BE.

PUT!

IT!

ON!







I'M
THREE YEARS
OLD.

I
THINK I LOVE
YOU.

DON'T
RUIN THIS
FOR ME.

OKAY.



FANTASTIC FAN PAGE 4

So the word is out! And while we bid farewell and good fortune to Jonathan Hickman, who'll be departing for the world of Earth's Mightiest Heroes after next month, we can now confirm that taking over the helm will be Matt Fraction, with the illustrious Mark Bagley on FANTASTIC FOUR and the incomparable Mike Allred on FF! It's a new beginning for Marvel's cornerstone quartet—but it'll have that same old Marvel magic, rest assured!

Now let's see what words you had for us:

I just wanted to say that I have really enjoyed the recent FF and FANTASTIC FOUR books. The story was complex and fun.

This is your chance to make up for what happened at the end of the "Masters of Doom" storyline, as at the end of that arc Doom was pretty much all powerful. That seemed to be ignored in favor of a "Doom got brain damage" story. But now the potential is there for Doom to build.

I maintain that the best way to explain some of the weaknesses and failures of Doom of late is to say that when he defeated his masters and became all-powerful, he left a "super Doombot", one that replicated him perfectly as he was before his godly power-up (including making him human to mental detections). So the real Doom is off exploring the galaxy, while super Doombot (with two Infinity Gauntlets) is gaining in power. Then they can have a cosmic battle that serves to destroy "super Doombot" and weaken the real Doom, bringing him back to normal levels.

Keep up the great work and thanks for the years of entertainment.

As always, Make mine Marvel!

Mark Rennick

What you propose sounds like it could be fun, Mark. But speaking just for myself, I don't really care for it when we casually use the "he was a Doombot" excuse to wipe out a Doom story that wasn't to somebody's liking. That seems a tad disrespectful to the folks who put the time and effort into crafting those stories, not to mention the readers who followed them. I'm not saying that I'd never use the Doombot excuse, though—only that I'd need a really compelling reason for doing so.

Dear Mr. Hickman,

I am a longtime fan of FANTASTIC FOUR. I started reading as a child and this has always been my core book. As a kid I used to save all my money to purchase back issues and now I own almost every issue ever published. So my question to you refers to the 11 issue gap (issues #588-599). At first I thought FF would only run 11 issues but that did not happen. When FANTASTIC FOUR #600 was released you really did a great job of filling in all the loose ends but ultimately FANTASTIC FOUR is still off by 11 issues. So I wondered if you had any thoughts or plans on this situation. My thoughts are an 11 issue story that either sent the team on a time jump and each issue would cover one hour (this way we are only talking about 11 hours) or maybe dealing with other characters from the Marvel Universe filling in for the FF in their time of mourning (The Great Lakes Fantastic Four). I even thought maybe you could tell a tale in reverse so Part One would be issue #599. There are parallel Reeds not on the council such as The Brute or the Reed that turned into the Thing as well as the Earth-A Johnny Storm / Gaard. Please consider giving us back the 11 issues we missed out on.

Thanks
Rock Star Rob Templeton
Philadelphia, PA

That's the thing about mighty Marvel, Rob—we even innovate on how we number the issues! We don't really have any plans at the moment to fill in those missing numbers—we feel that

job was done well enough by FF #1-11—but you never know what tomorrow may bring! And hey, a number of your ideas eerily parallel conversations we've been having with new scribe Matt Fraction, so you're likely in for some enjoyable reading ahead! (Now, if you'd found a way to get a Doombot in there, too...)

Dear FF,

I am thoroughly enjoying the current run of FANTASTIC FOUR and FF but have a couple of requests:

1) Combine the two titles into one book, then have it ship twice a month similar to AMAZING SPIDER-MAN. These two books are so interconnected that they read like a single book anyway and, to be honest, I sometimes get mixed up whether I should read FANTASTIC FOUR or FF first.

2) Please consider doing something with the villains from the Tom DeFalco/ Paul Ryan/Danny Bulanadi run. I think those characters have untapped potential that Jonathan and company could flesh out.

Thanks!
Jeff Coburn
Orleans, VT

Good to hear from you, Jeff! As a matter of fact, we had been planning to collapse FANTASTIC FOUR and FF into a single multi-shipping title as part of the upcoming MARVEL NOW! launch, but then the storyline took us in a different direction, as you'll soon see! In terms of the DeFalco/Ryan/ Bulanadi villains, Jonathan's recently invoked Hyperstorm's name, and I always had a soft spot for Oculus, so we'll see what we can do!

Dear Editors,

Jonathan Hickman has had an interesting run on FANTASTIC FOUR. I thought he started off strong and I've generally enjoyed his run, although I thought the death of Johnny Storm was gimmicky and unnecessary. Don't get me wrong, it was handled pretty well, and would have been powerful if he were not coming back—but come back he did, so it felt like just another comic book death to drive sales. Nevertheless the run has been pretty good and as we near the end of it, I wanted to comment on issue #605.

Like most comics I enjoy these days, there wasn't a lot of fighting but there was character development. I thought the successive imaginings of New York City as they went farther into the future was a nice touch. While I found the idea of Ben living for several thousand years far-fetched, it was still well done and the farewell that Franklin gave to Ben was touching. I loved the ending where Reed sits and watches TV with Ben and just... spends time. Very nice. Hickman has done a really fine job portraying the FF as a FAMILY. He'll be missed on this title both for that and his far-out imaginative plots. I'm just sorry he didn't bring the Inhumans back to Earth. Sending them off to Kree space always seemed silly to me, and when they appeared in the War of Four Cities I was thrilled and hoping they would take up residence on the moon or Earth again. Oh well...

Ron Garney doesn't seem particularly suited to this title (I liked him on CAPTAIN AMERICA years ago) but he will probably grow on me. Kitson would be nice if you could swing that, I really liked the stuff he did recently. It will be interesting to see what other items Hickman attends to before he leaves this title. Also curious to see what becomes of Future Foundation--will that prosper or wither with Hickman's departure? Hope you guys have a good replacement lined up...

Thanks for a nice issue.

Sincerely,
Greg Hill
Grand Rapids, MI

You spoke too soon, Greg—as you no doubt know, the Inhumans returned from deep space in the last few issues of FF, and are now back on Earth! And no worries about the Future Foundation—it'll be playing a key role in the stories to come post-Hickman!

O Most Marvelous Helmsmen of the Fantastic Four, FF Fan Page:

I've never gotten a letter published by Marvel and it'd mean the world to me if it could be this one. Thank you.

Ish #605 gave me nostalgic chills. I've been reading FANTASTIC FOUR since I was 3 or 4 years old and got the remains of my dad's comic collection which survived a tornado. I was growing up with Kirby's material and have kept reading FANTASTIC FOUR and Marvel ever since. I just turned 30 in March.

Reading this issue reminded me of all the times Ben has had so far. All these rich, wonderful stories that I've grown up with, and everything that's happened with one of my very favorite comic characters, The Thing. All these memories flooded back as I read this issue. I watched Reed and Nathaniel travel further into the future to see how Ben was doing. Seeing him brought a tear to my eye, especially during 5012 and 6012. Again, Ben has always been my favorite. The older I get, the more I feel like I can sympathize with the character and this issue really reminded me of that. It was special and also tied into Hickman's saga wonderfully.

This was the best issue of FANTASTIC FOUR I've read in a long time. That's not meant to put down previous stuff, as I've enjoyed it ALL... just to say that this one left a special mark on my heart that I know I'll carry with me for my next 30 years (or more).

Thanks guys,
Matt Strawbridge
Jonesboro, AR

Glad it made an impact on you, Matt! Write again in 2042, will you?

Dear Fantastic 4 Fan Page,

I have been reading FANTASTIC FOUR on and off since I was 5 years old (some 43 years now!), and would just like to say that Jonathan Hickman is the best thing to happen to this title in decades!

He has proved time and again that he can write epic time-and-space spanning story-lines, but truly excels at those little character moments of humor, and pathos. The last three pages in FANTASTIC FOUR #605 was one of his best character moments, and displayed the true bond of friendship that binds Reed and Ben together.

The Future Foundation has also been a truly great addition to the Fantastic Four family, and long may that continue.

Marvel, please:

a) Keep Hickman on these two books for as long as possible. He has revitalized the FANTASTIC FOUR title, and made this the "must read" comic book again.

b) Keep the letters page! It's great to be able to read the thoughts of other fans about the title.

Keep up the fantastic work guys, and Make Mine Marvel!

Tony Alldis

Well, Tony, we'll be able to agree to one of your requests: While Jonathan is wrapping up his tenure next month, we'll be keeping the Fan Page around for the foreseeable future.

Tom B
8/13/12

As always, if you've got an opinion to share, you can e-mail it to us at MHEROES@MARVEL.COM. Be sure to mark your letters as "Okay To Print!" if you'd like to see them featured here on the Fan Page!



THE GRAND FINALE!



F I N A L I S S U E

TM



HICKMAN
DRAGOTTA
PETER

MARVEL

23

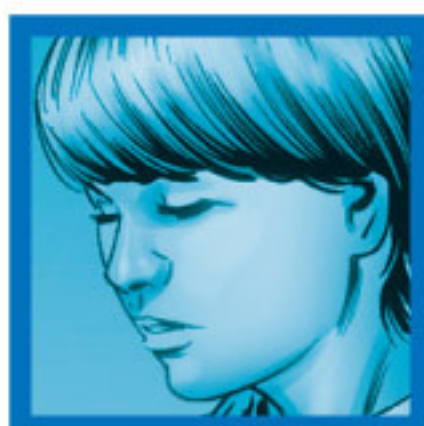
FUTURE INCARNATIONS OF FRANKLIN AND VAL HAVE JOURNEYED TO THE PRESENT. THE OLDER FRANKLIN MENTORED HIS YOUNGER SELF IN THE USE OF HIS REALITY-ALTERING POWERS. THROUGH THEIR ACTIONS, THE OLDER FRANKLIN AND VAL HAVE BROUGHT ABOUT A NEW FUTURE. BUT NOW IT'S TIME TO GO HOME.



REED RICHARDS
MISTER FANTASTIC



BENJAMIN GRIMM
THE THING



ALEX POWER



MIK, KORR & TURG



ARTIE



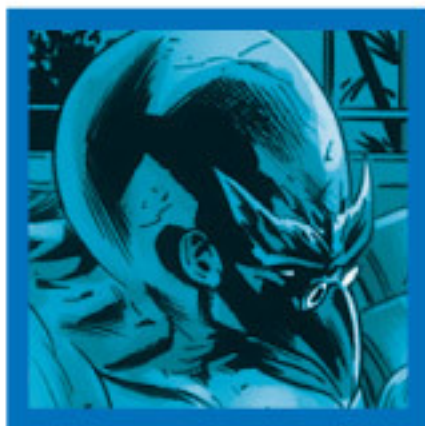
FUTURE FRANKLIN
RICHARDS



SUSAN RICHARDS
INVISIBLE WOMAN



VALERIA RICHARDS



DRAGON MAN



TONG



BENTLEY



FUTURE VALERIA
RICHARDS



JOHNNY STORM
THE HUMAN TORCH



FRANKLIN RICHARDS



WU & YIL



LEECH



ONOME

WRITER: JONATHAN HICKMAN

ARTIST: NICK DRAGOTTA

COLOR ARTIST: CRIS PETER

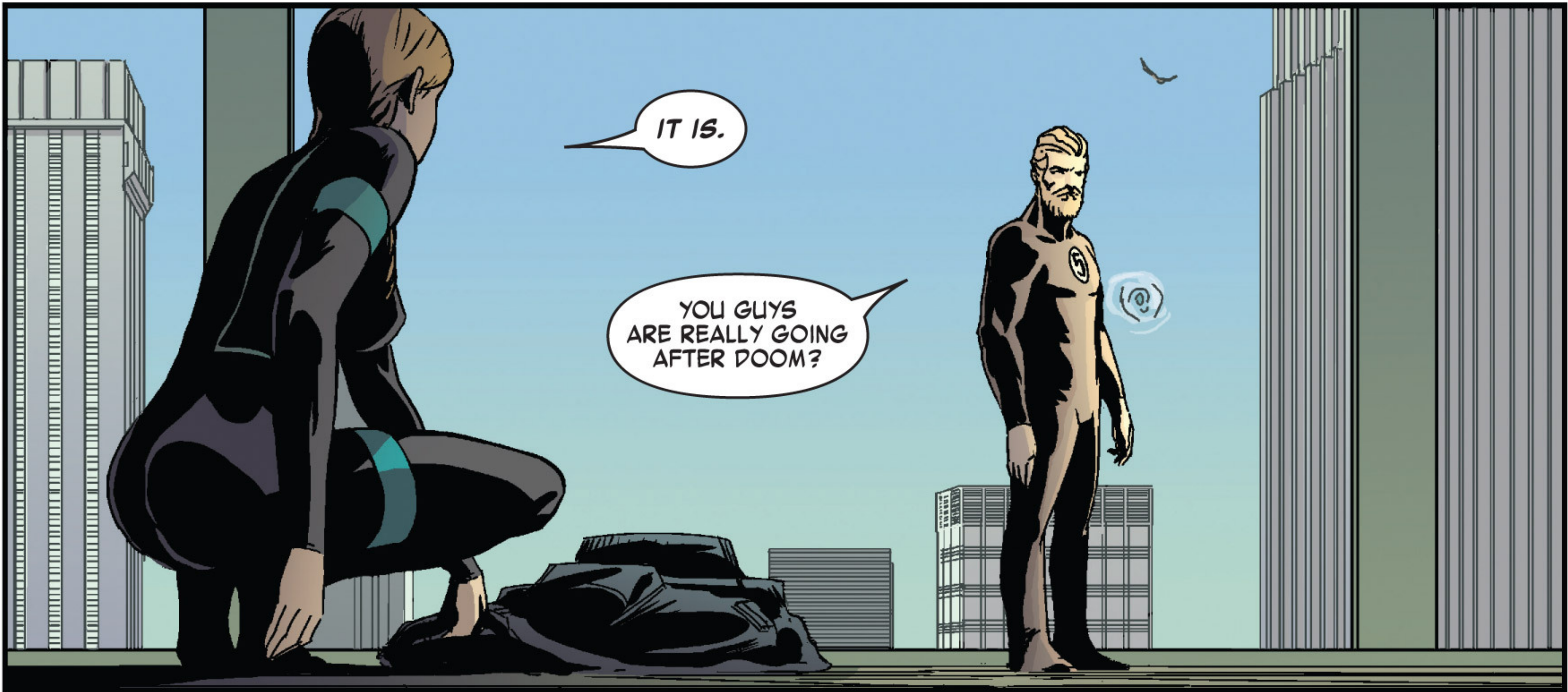
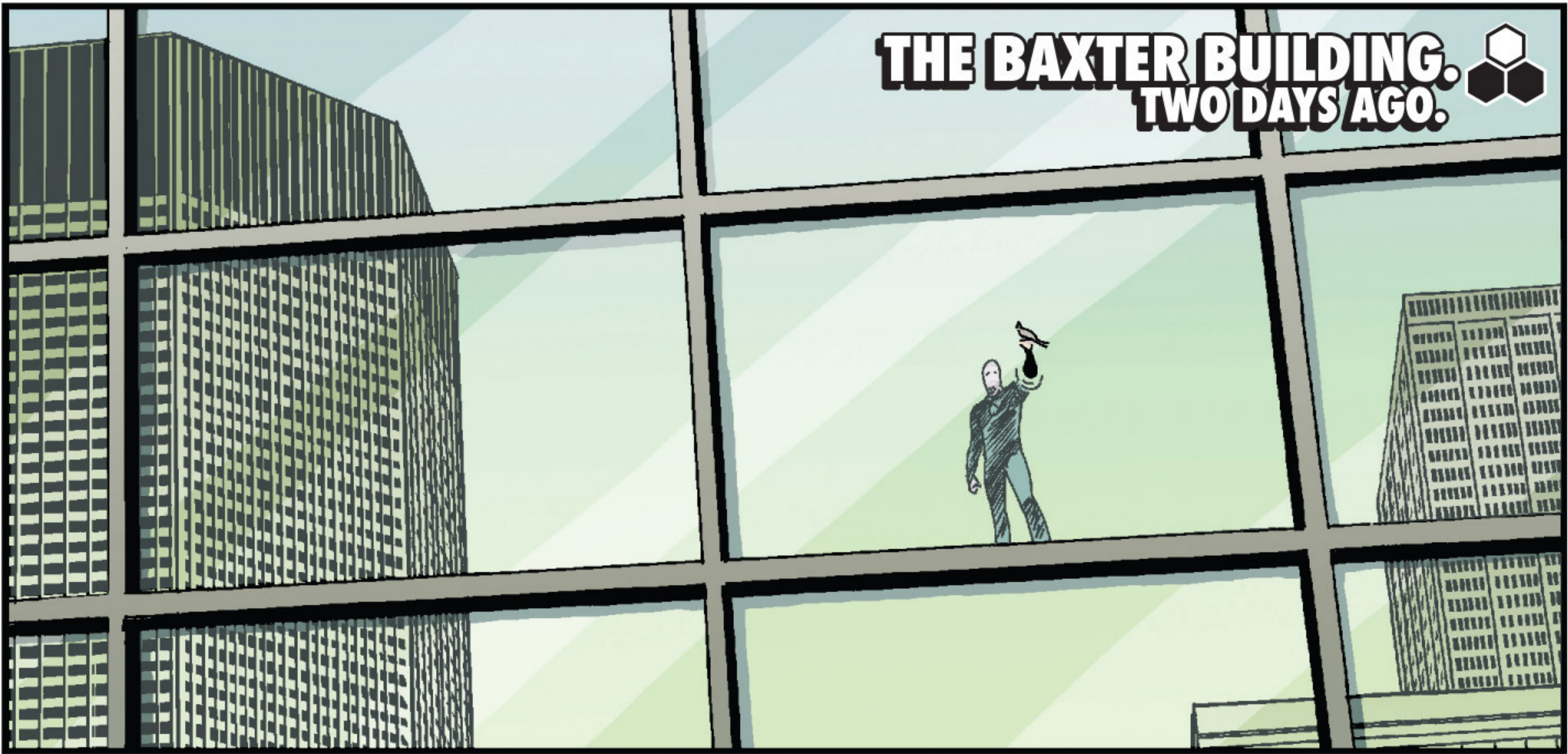
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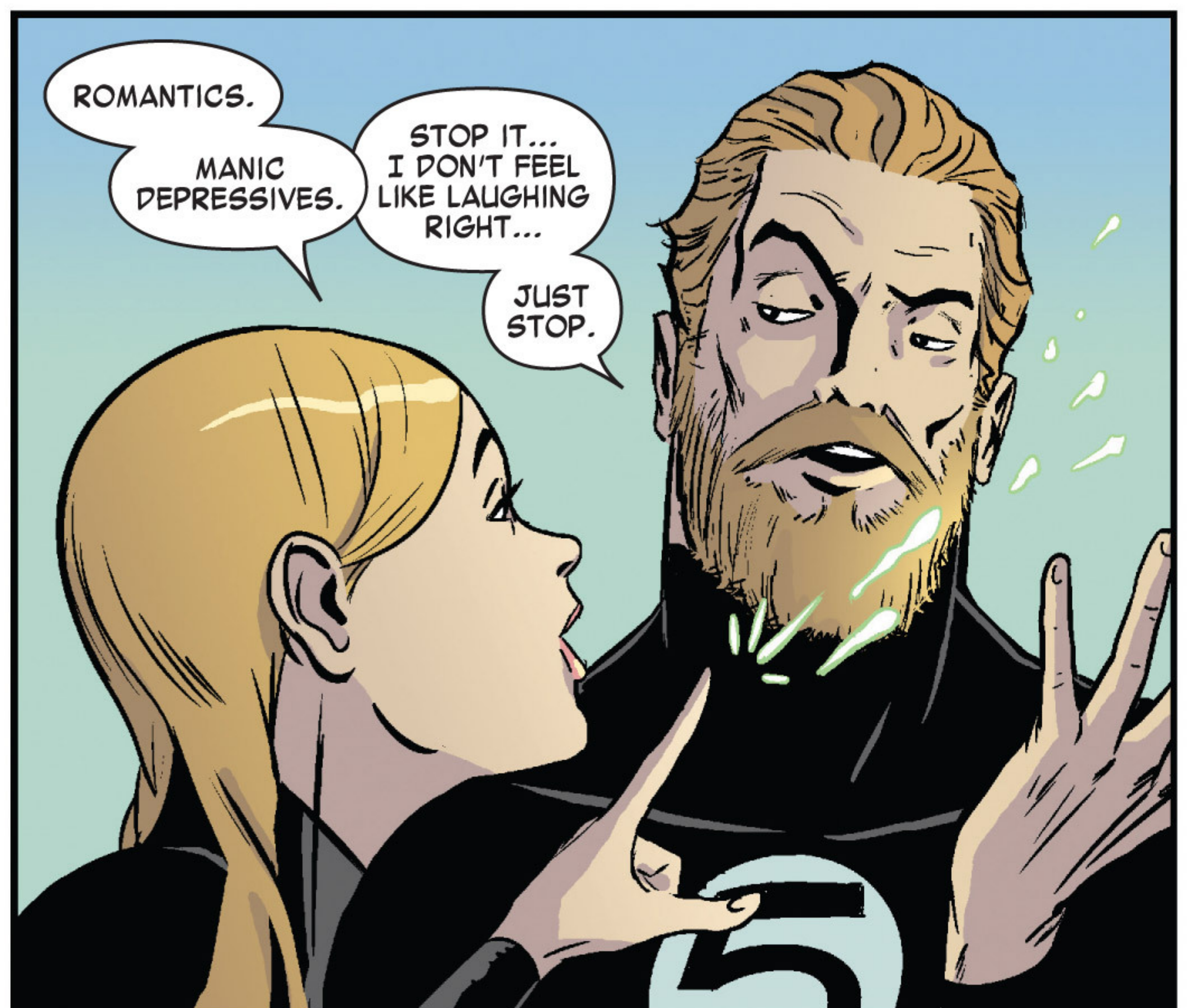
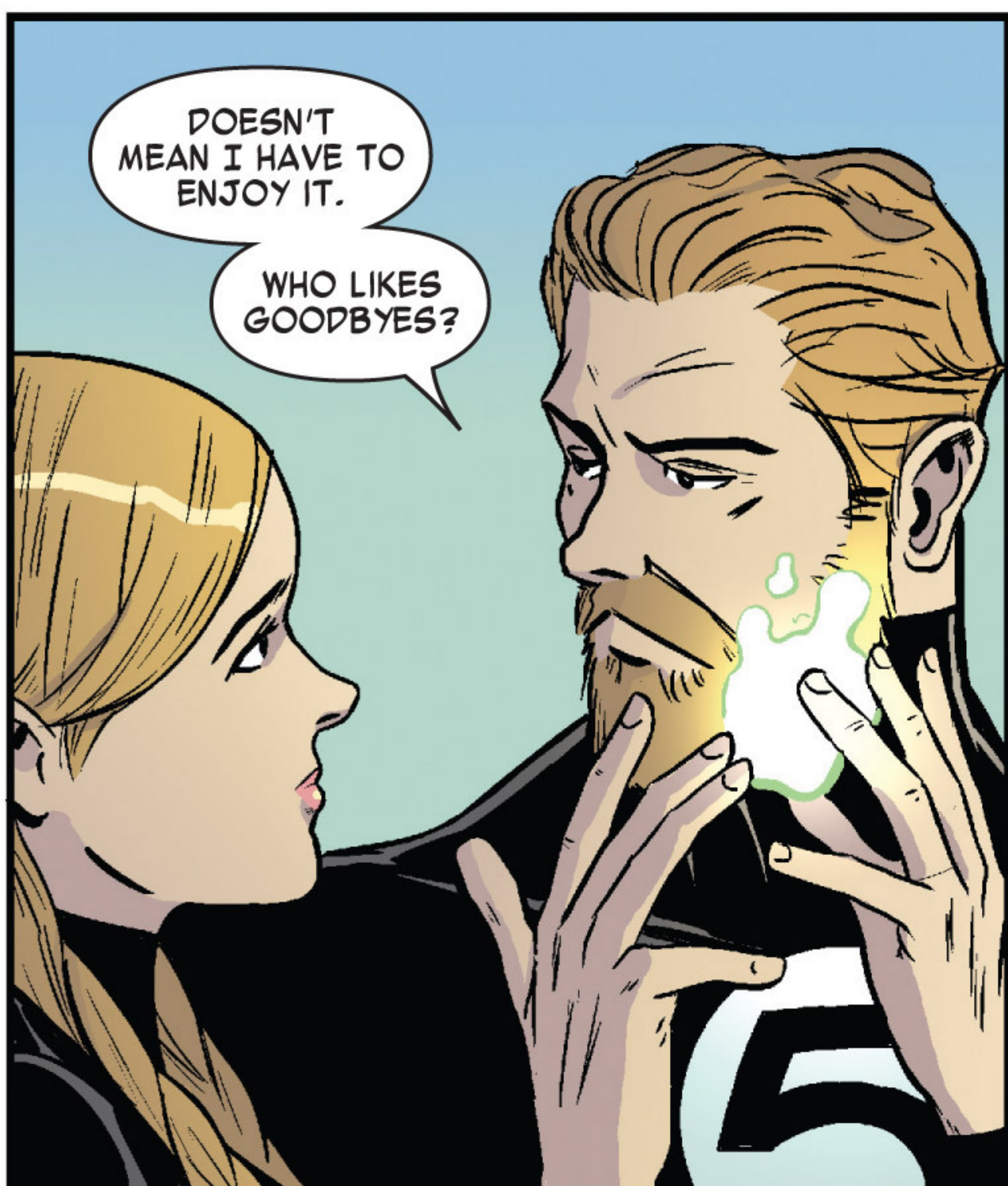
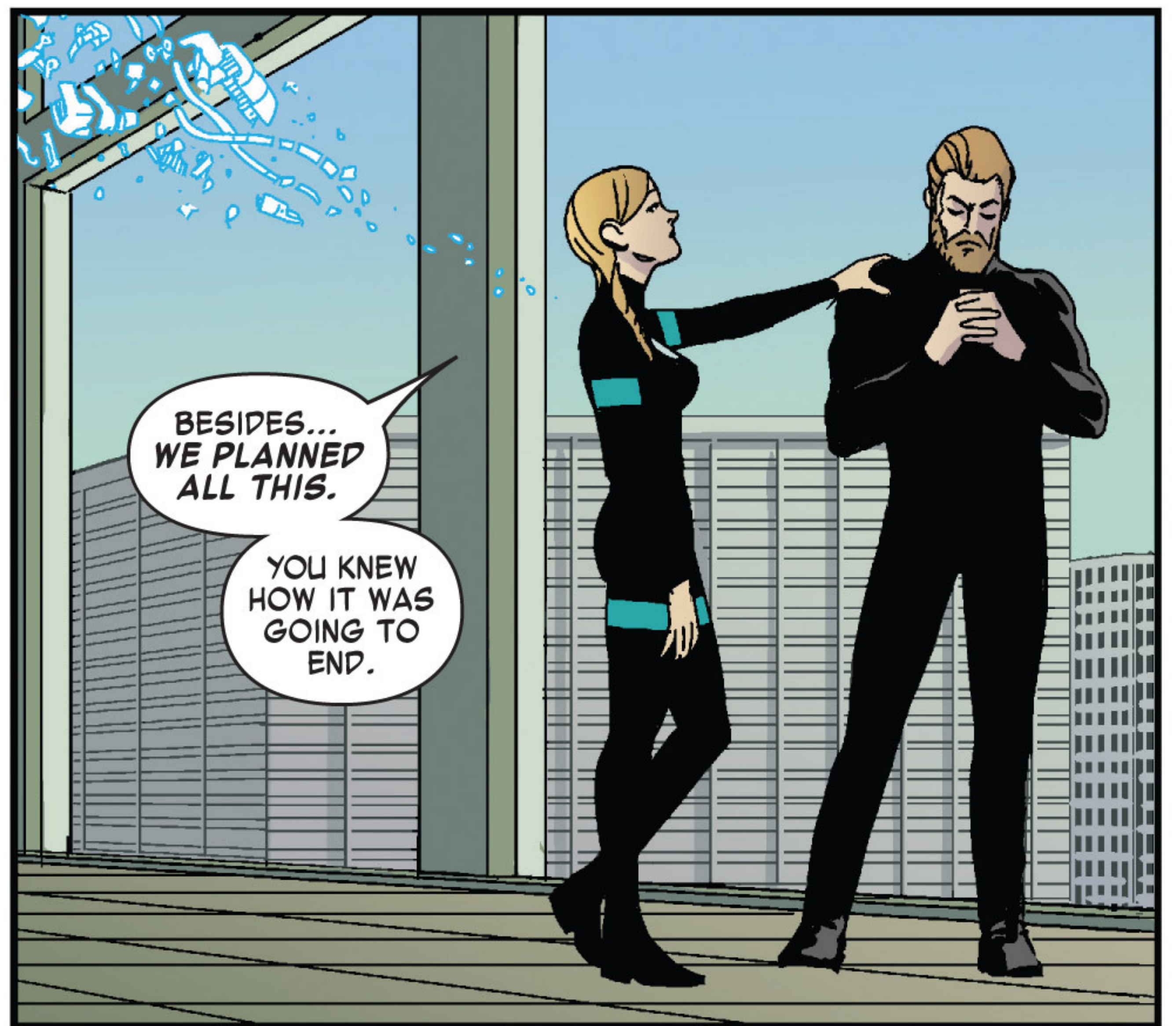
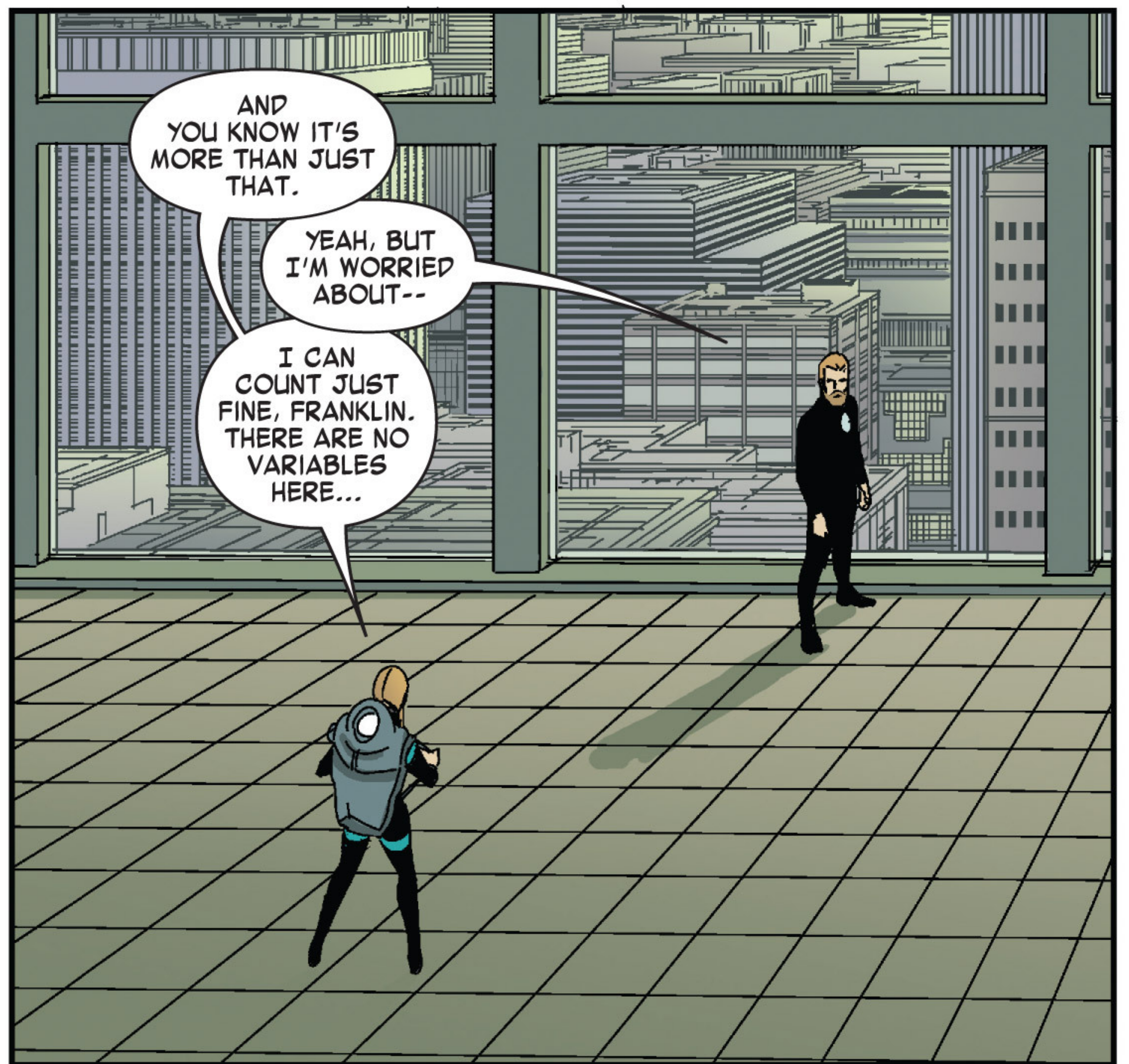
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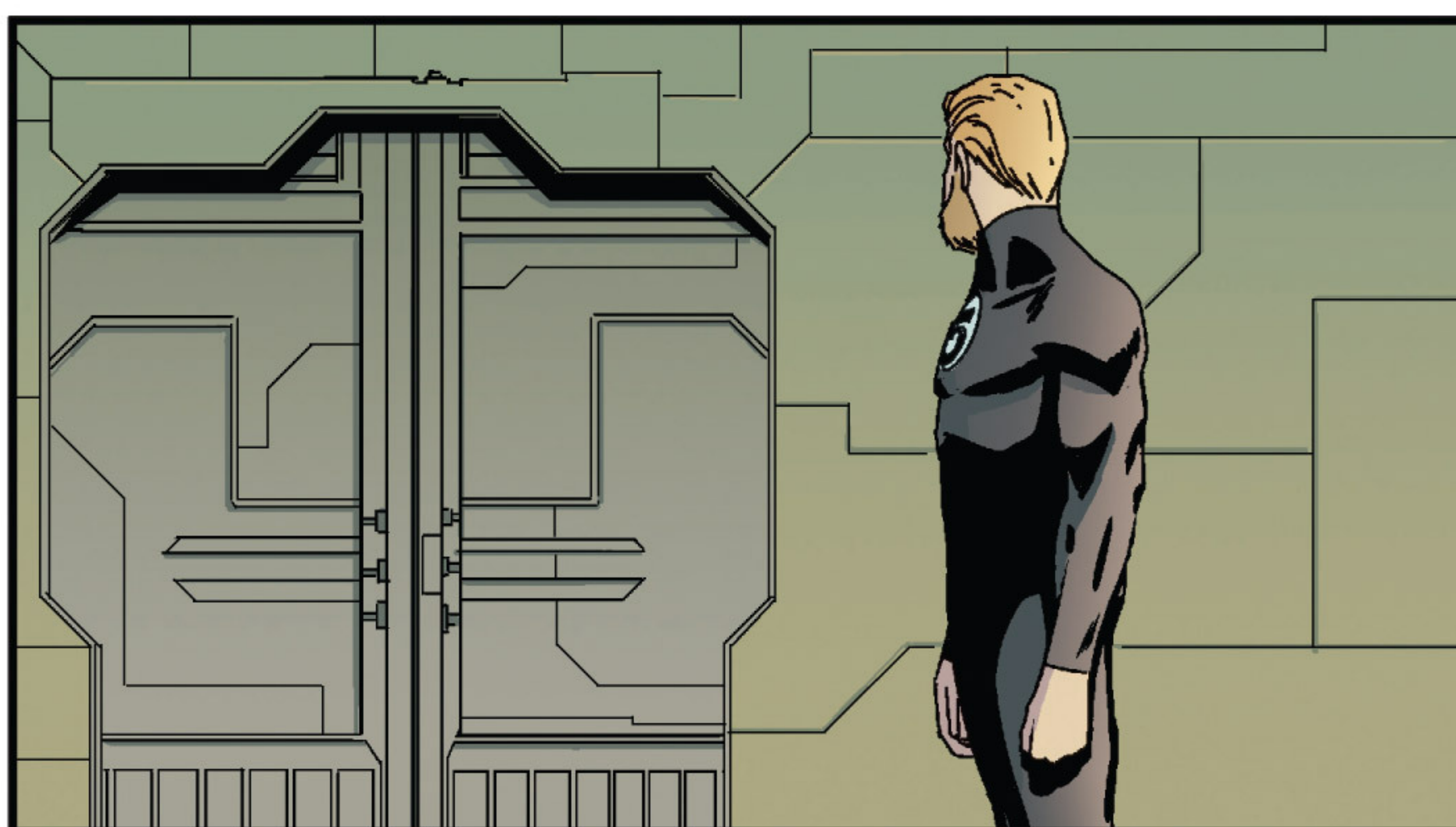
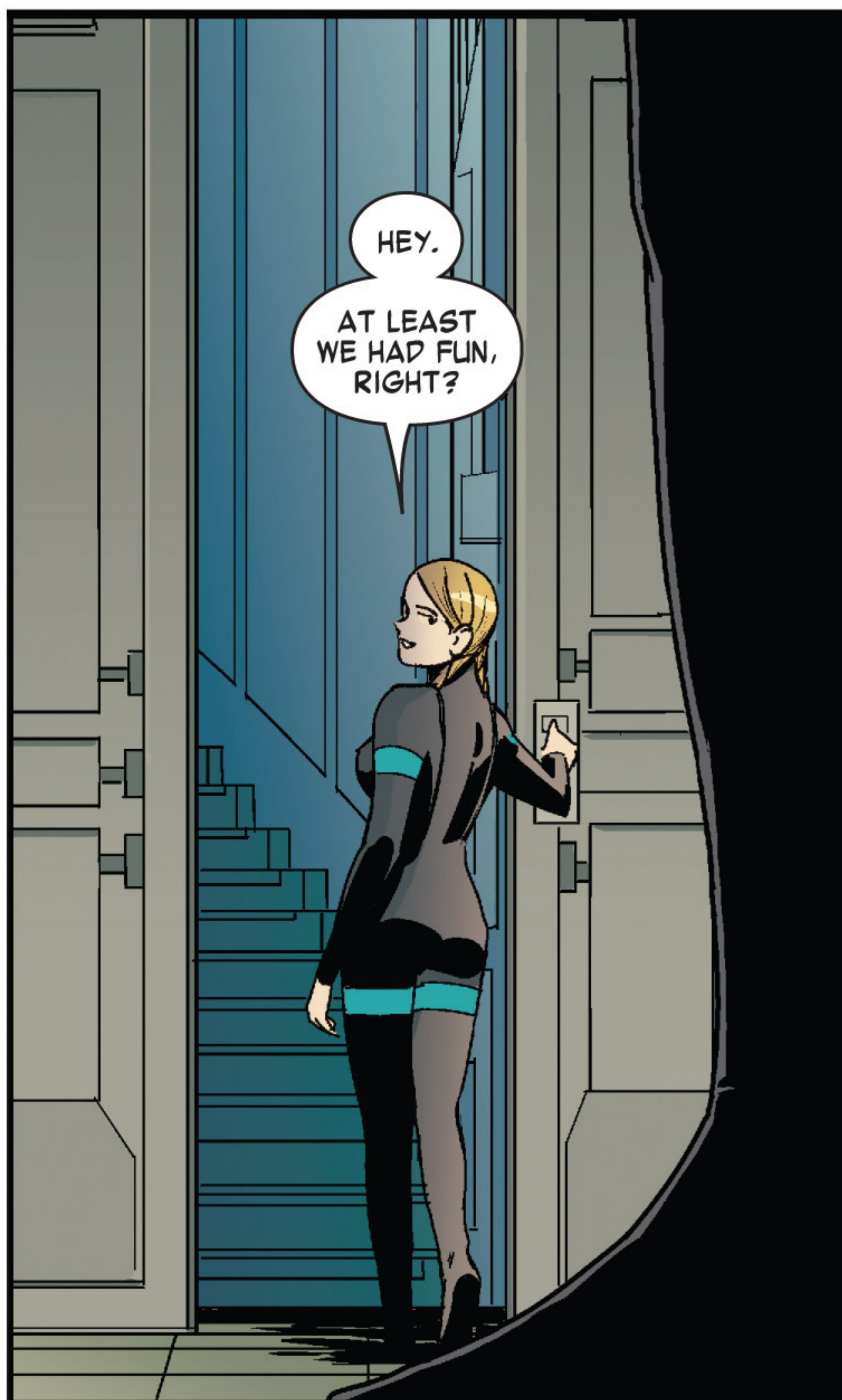
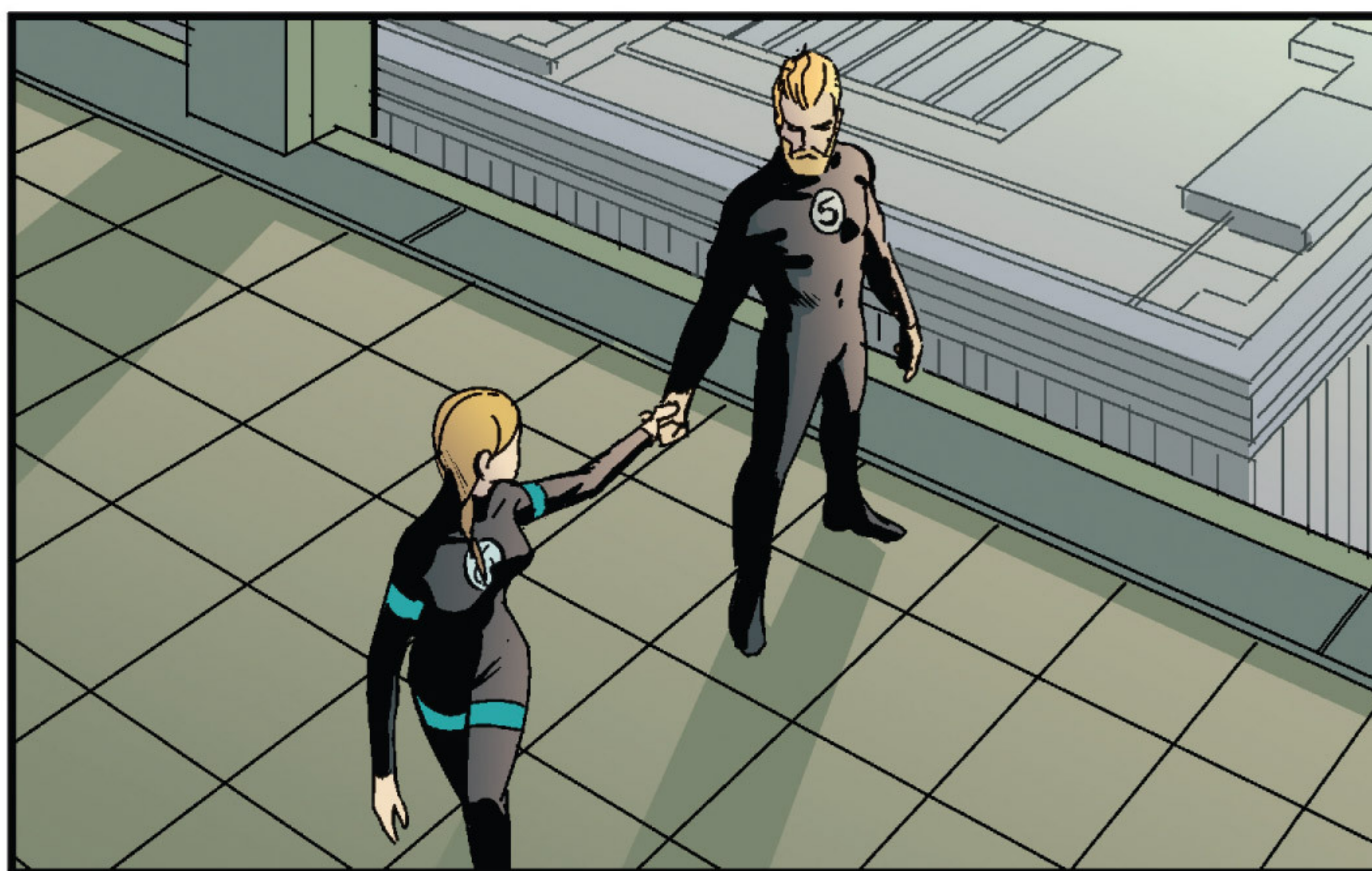
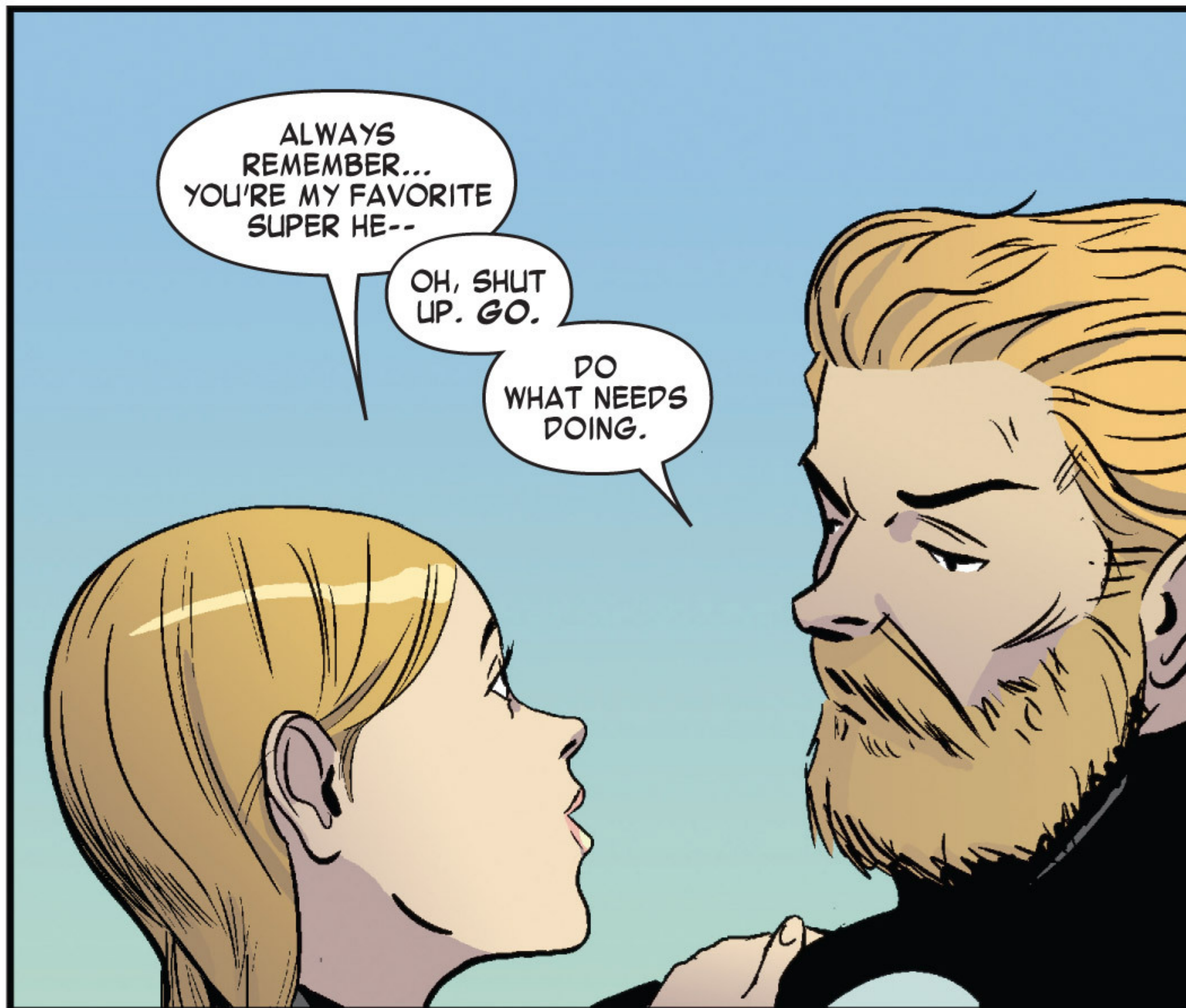
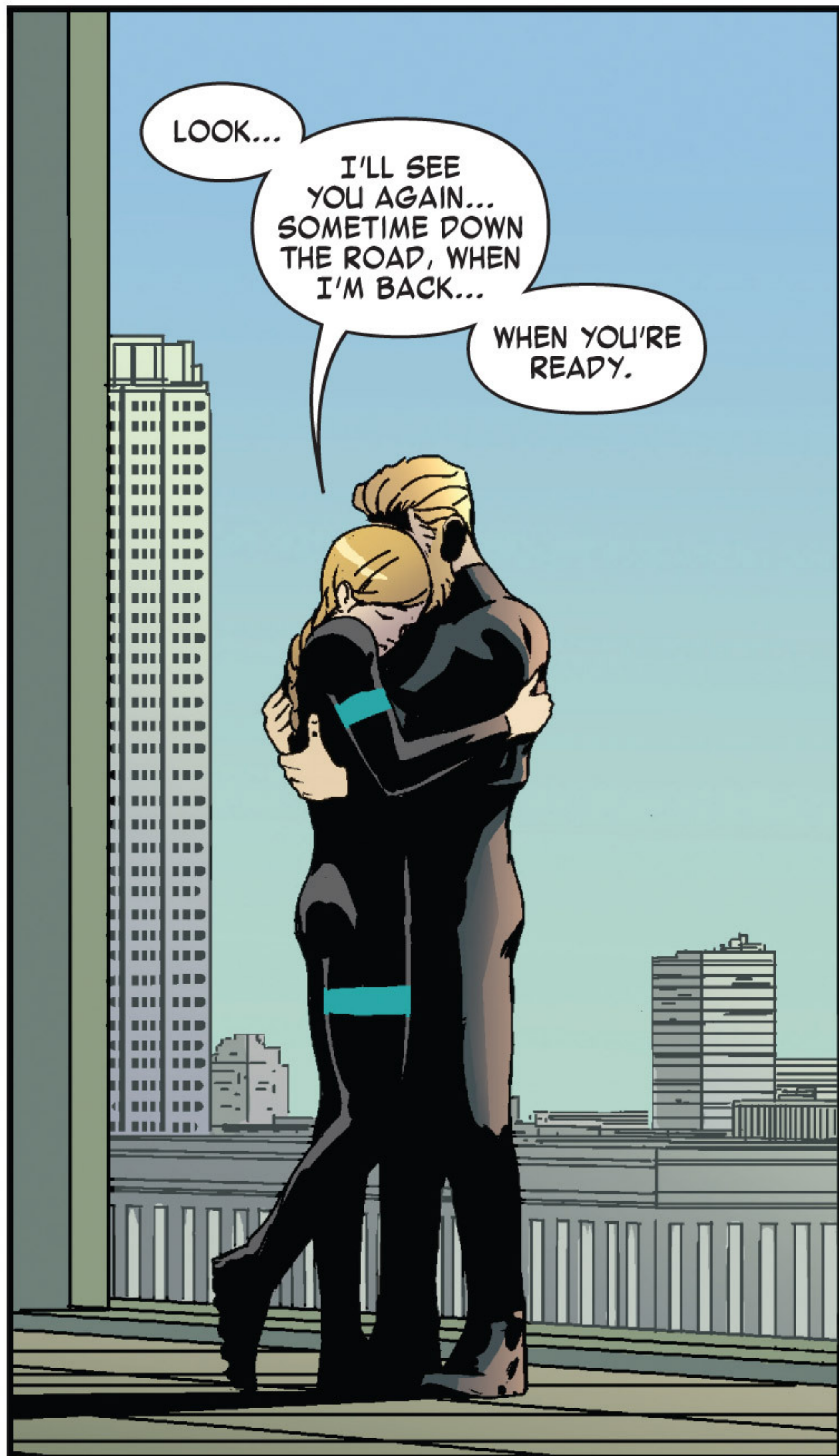
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EDITORS: TOM BREVOORT with
LAUREN SANKOVITCH

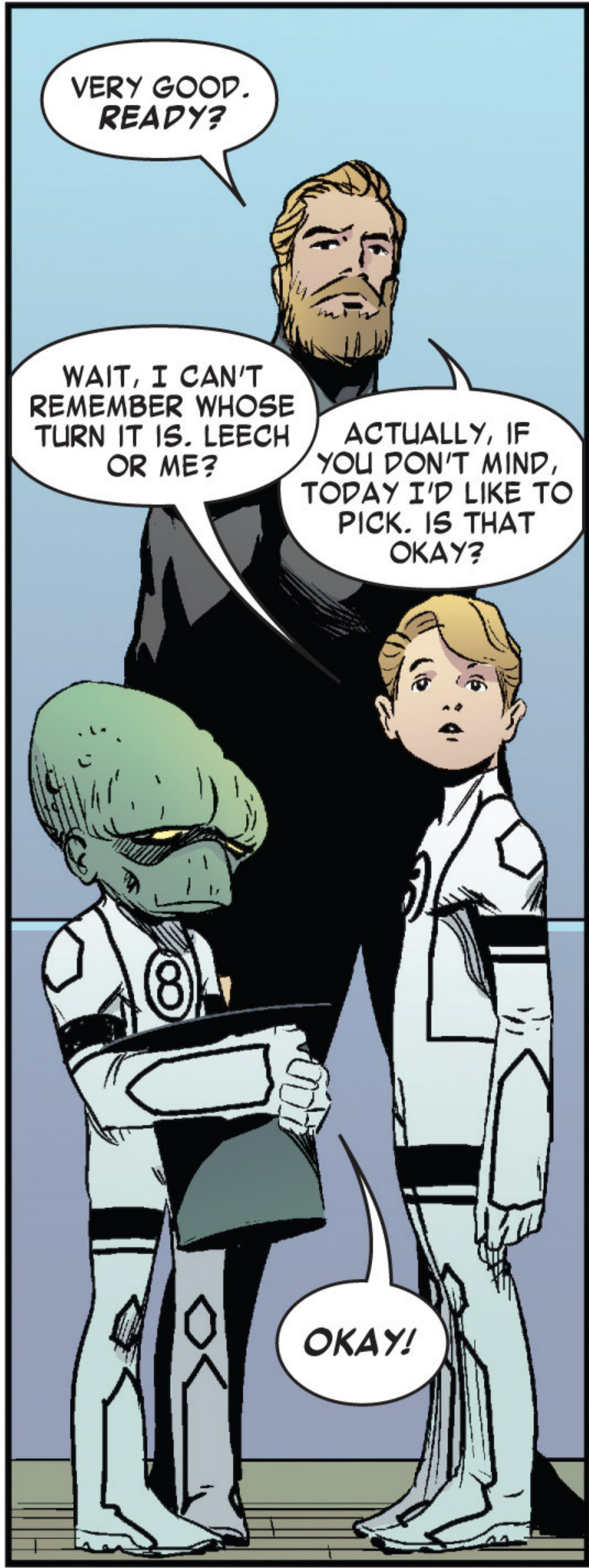
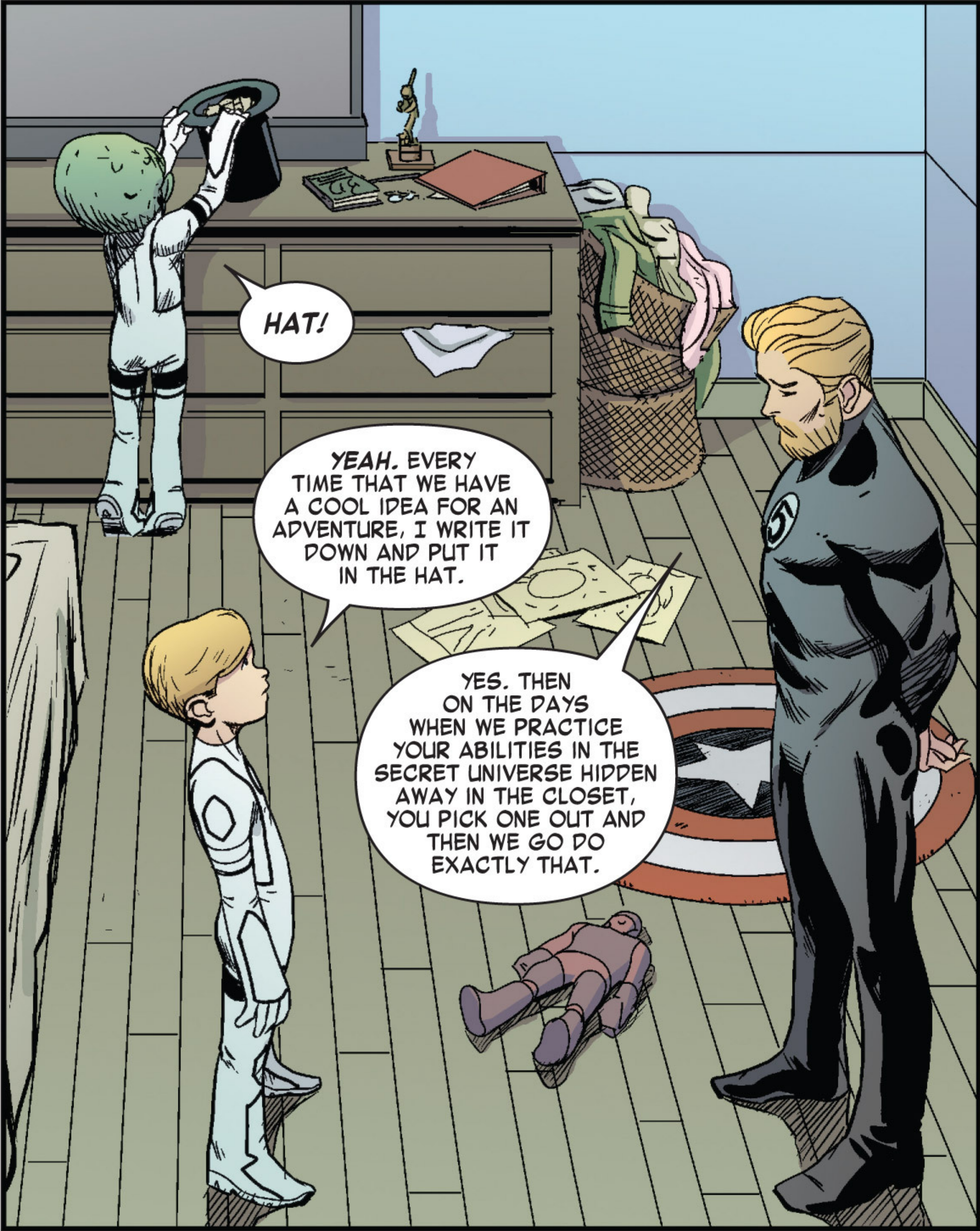
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CHIEF CREATIVE OFFICER: JOE QUESADA
PUBLISHER: DAN BUCKLEY
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: ALAN FINE

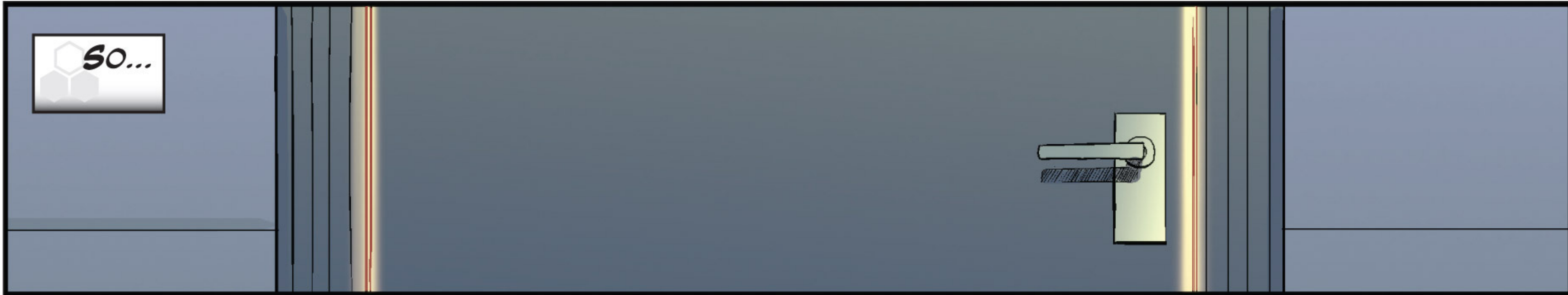
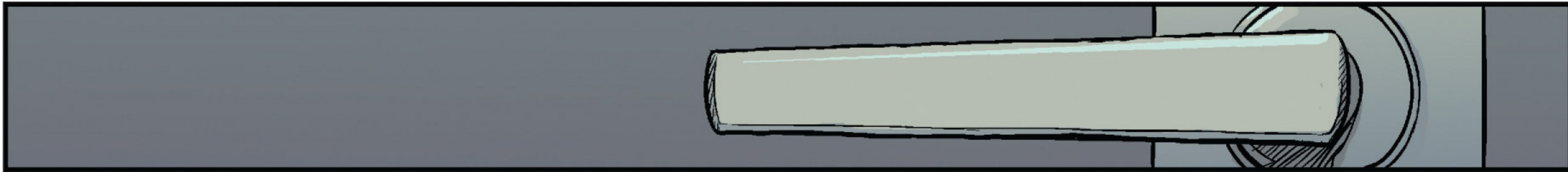


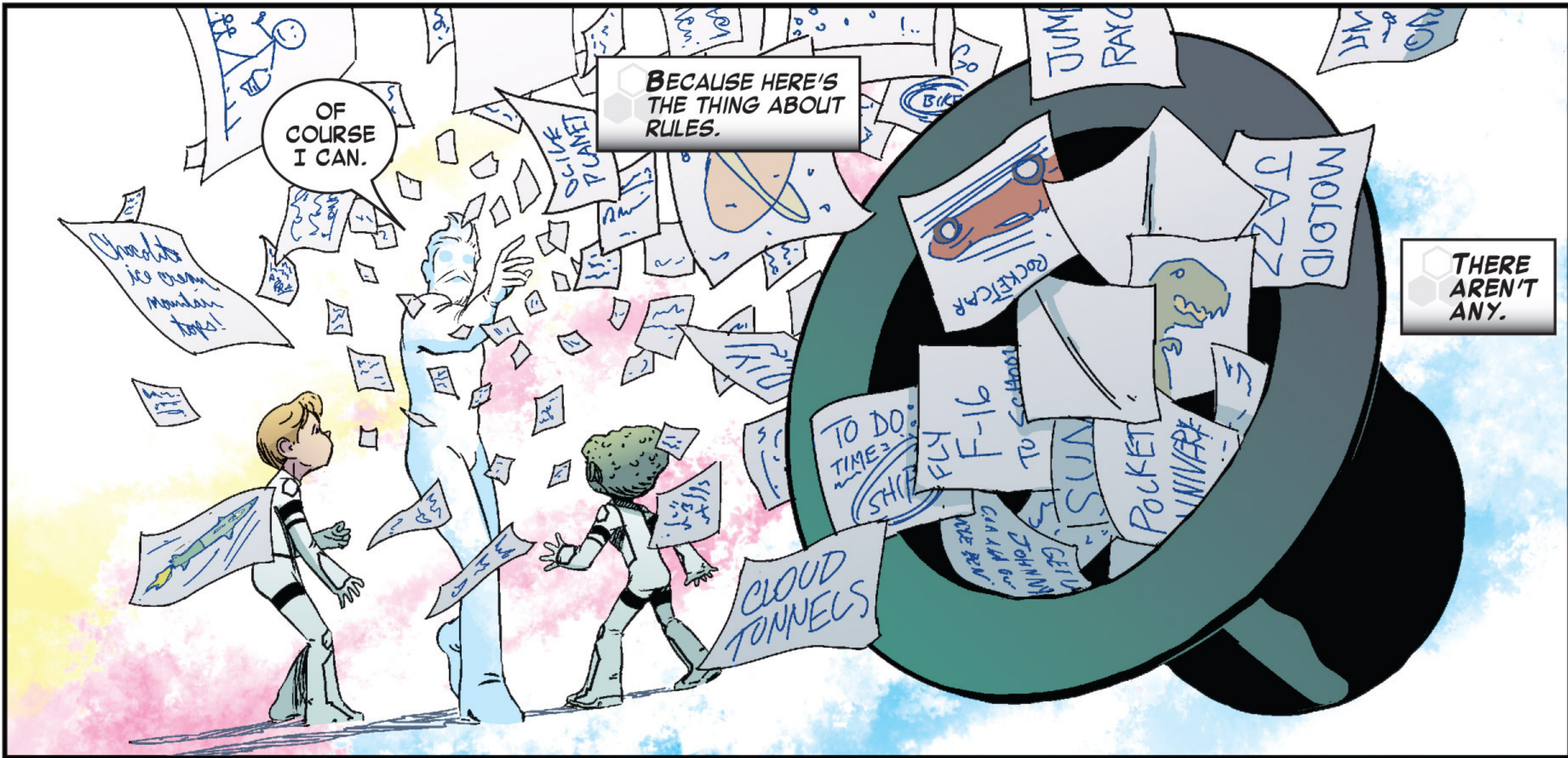
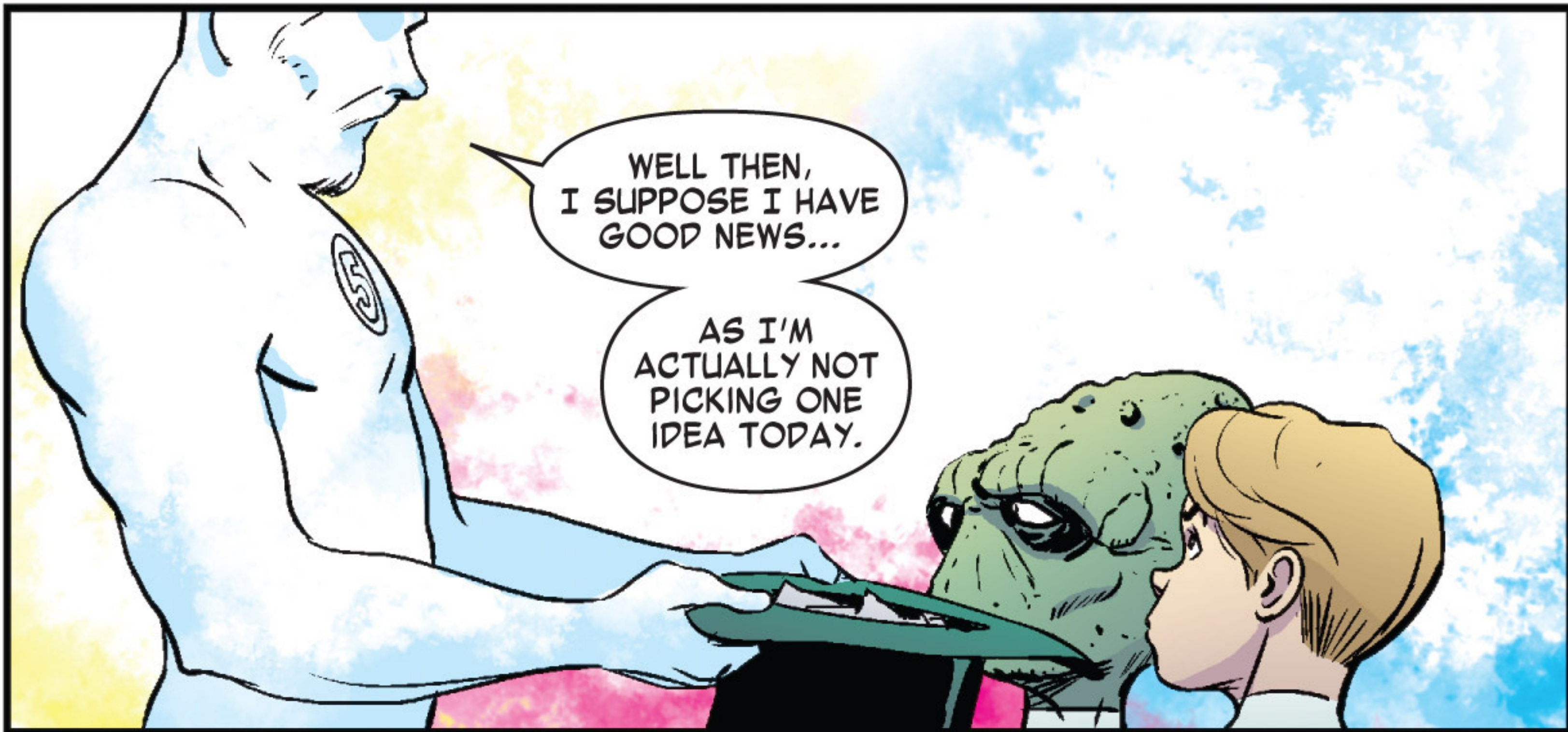
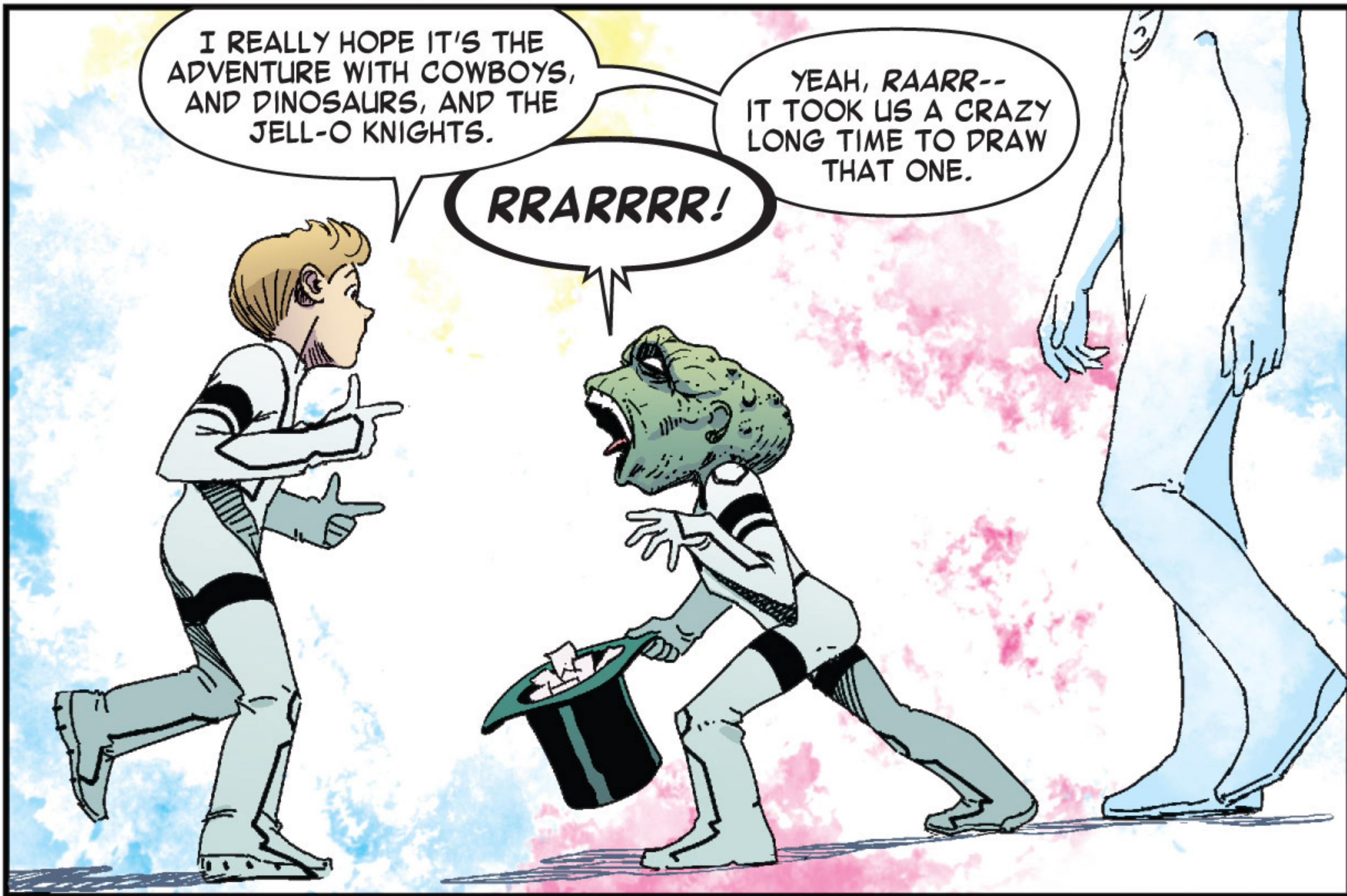


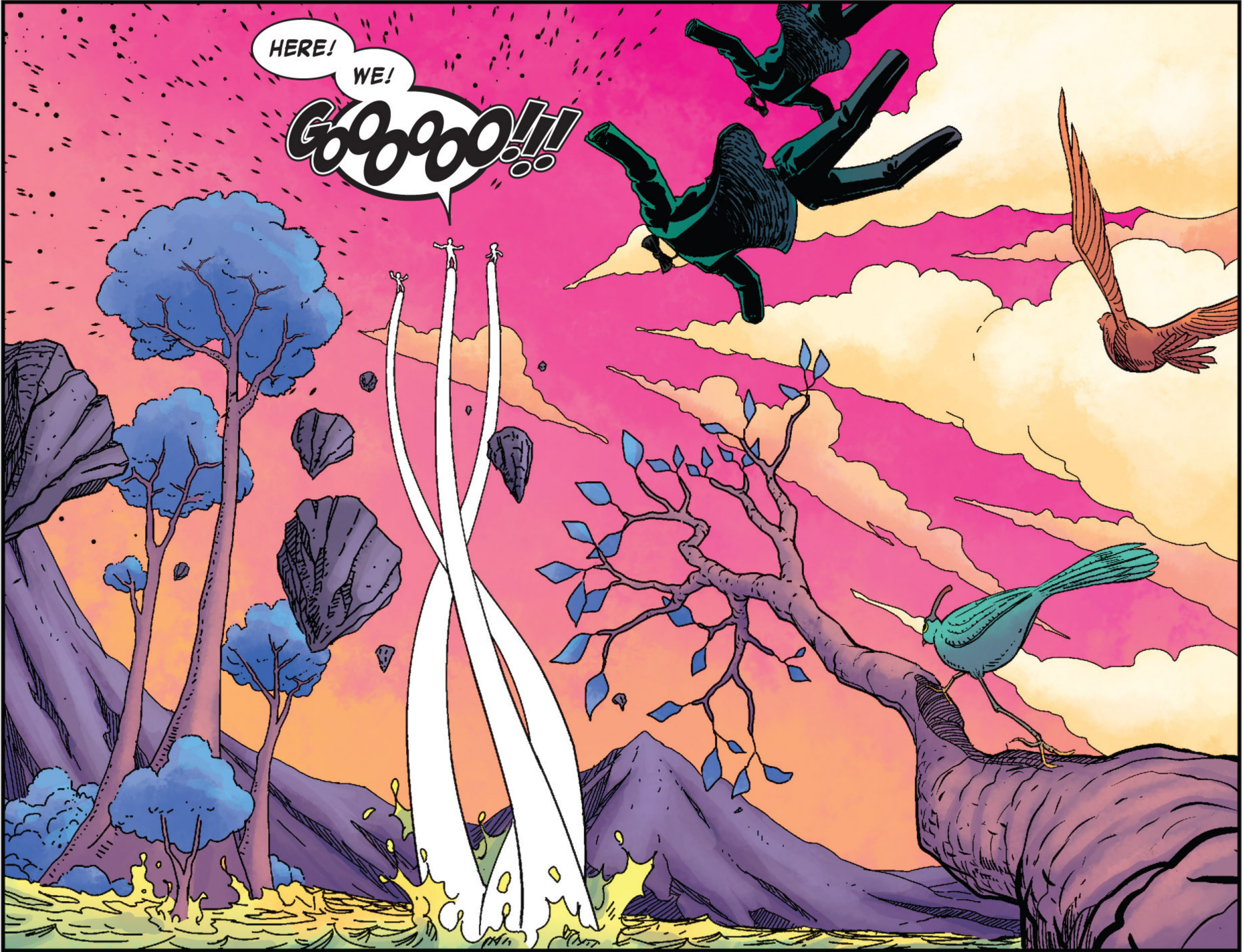
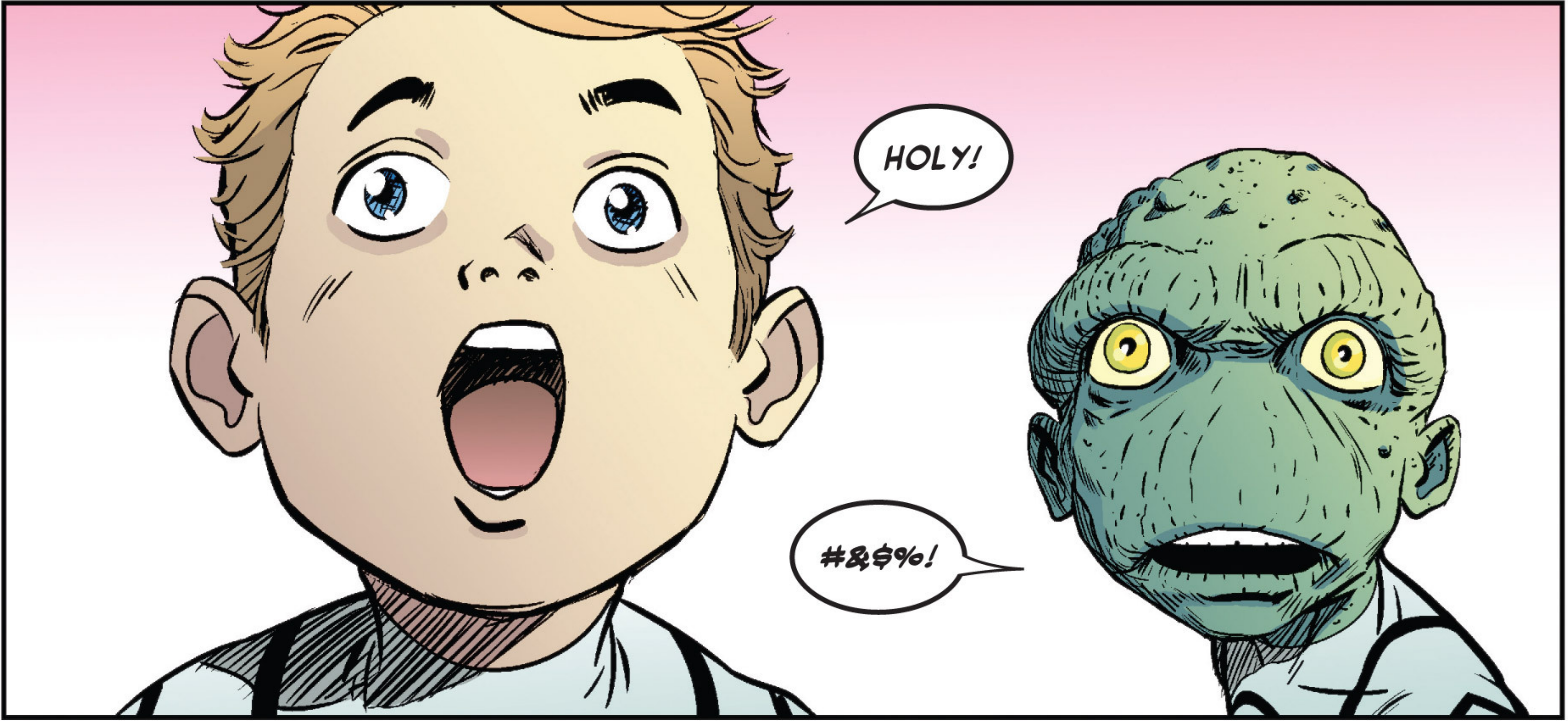
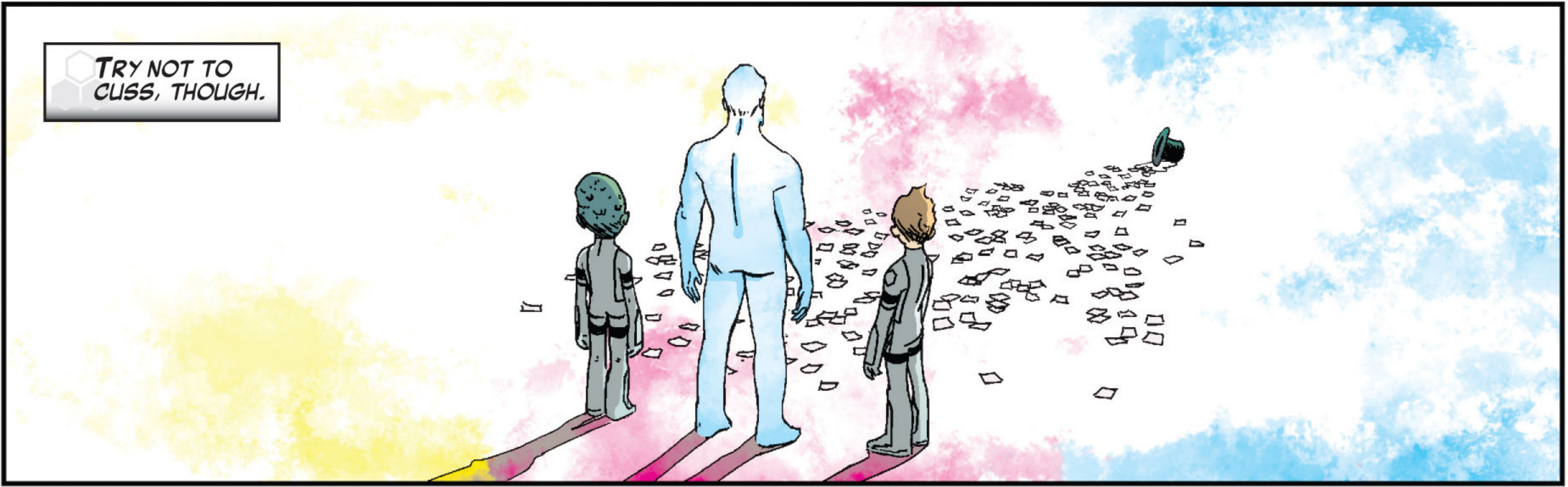


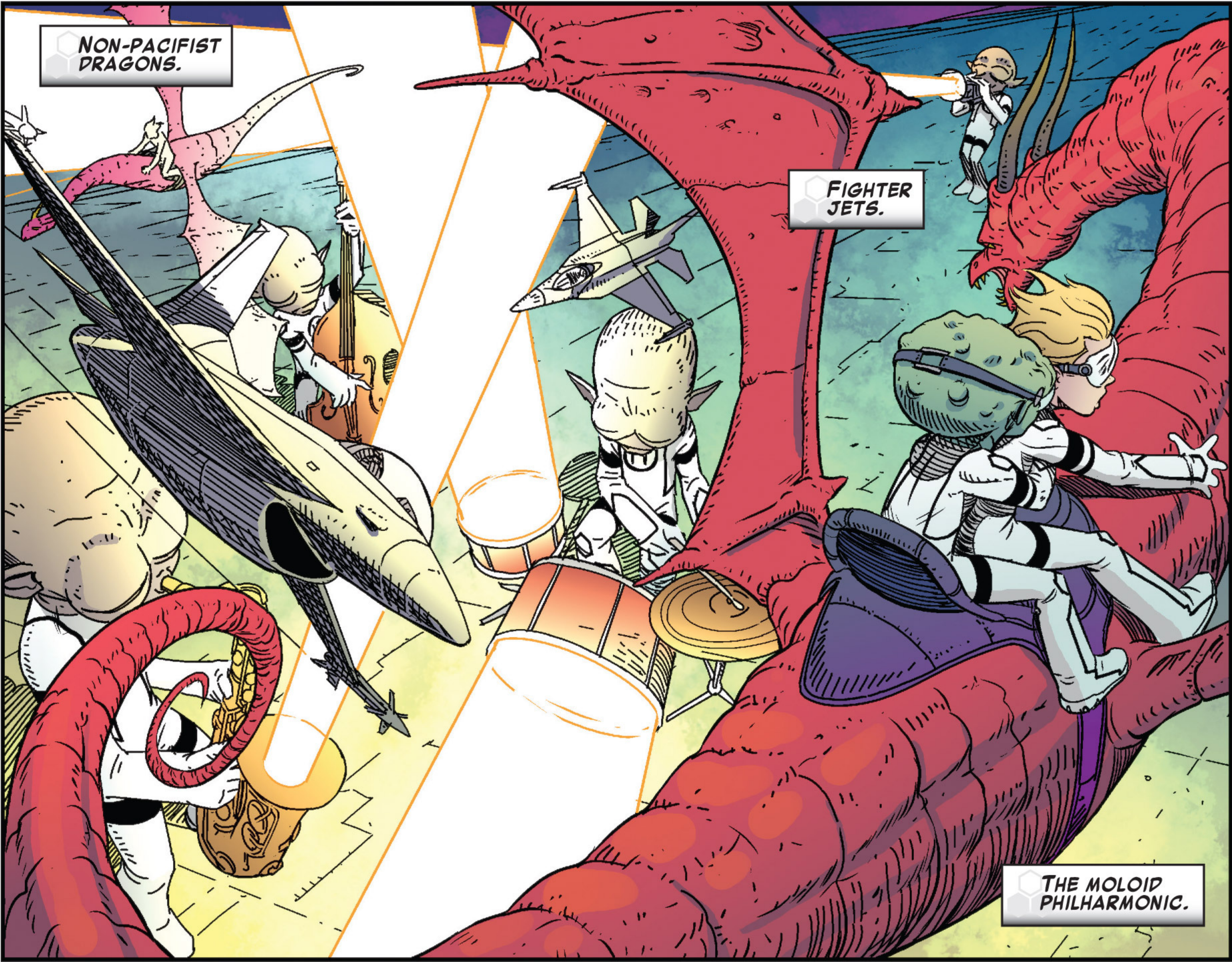
A FANTASTIC FOUR EPILOGUE:
RUN

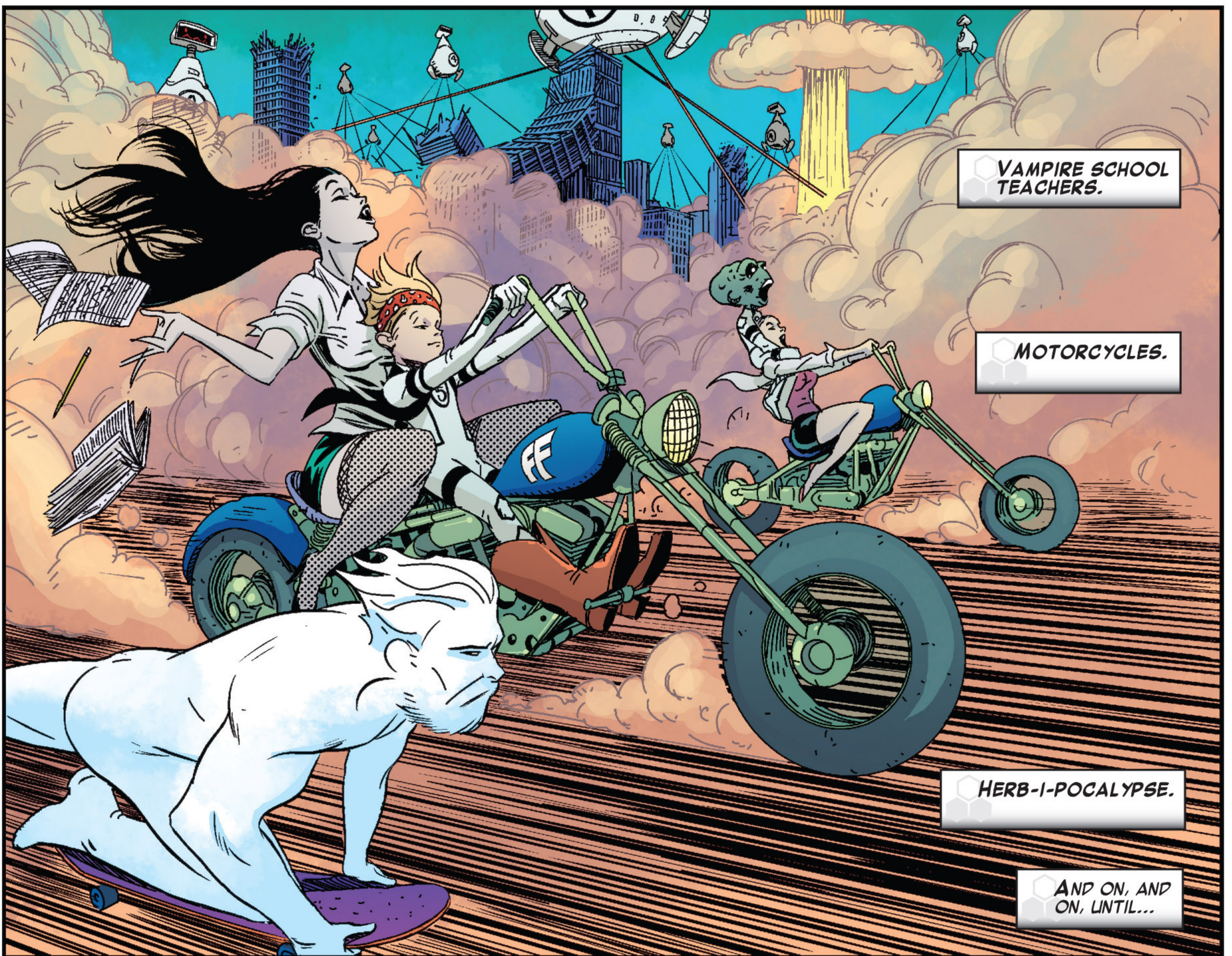
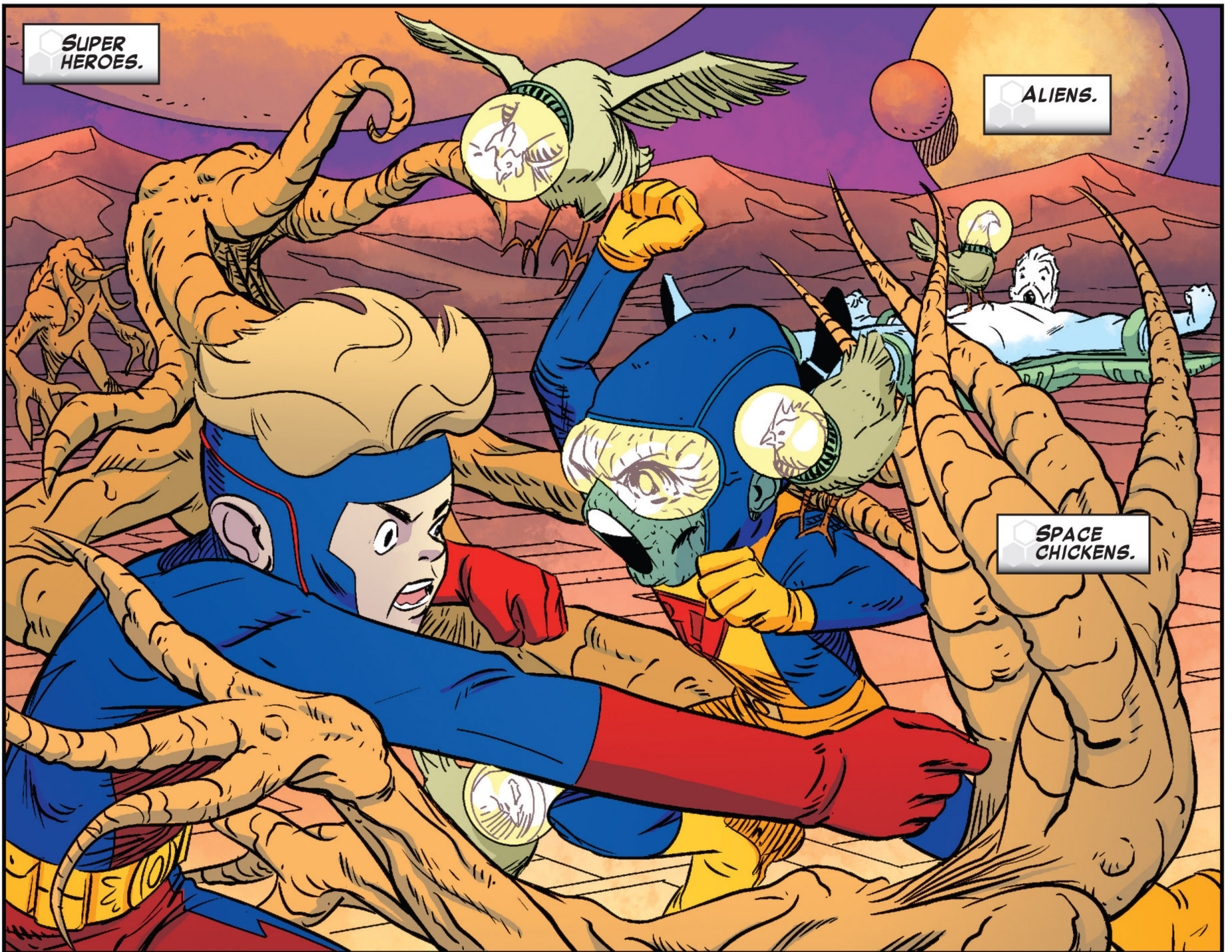


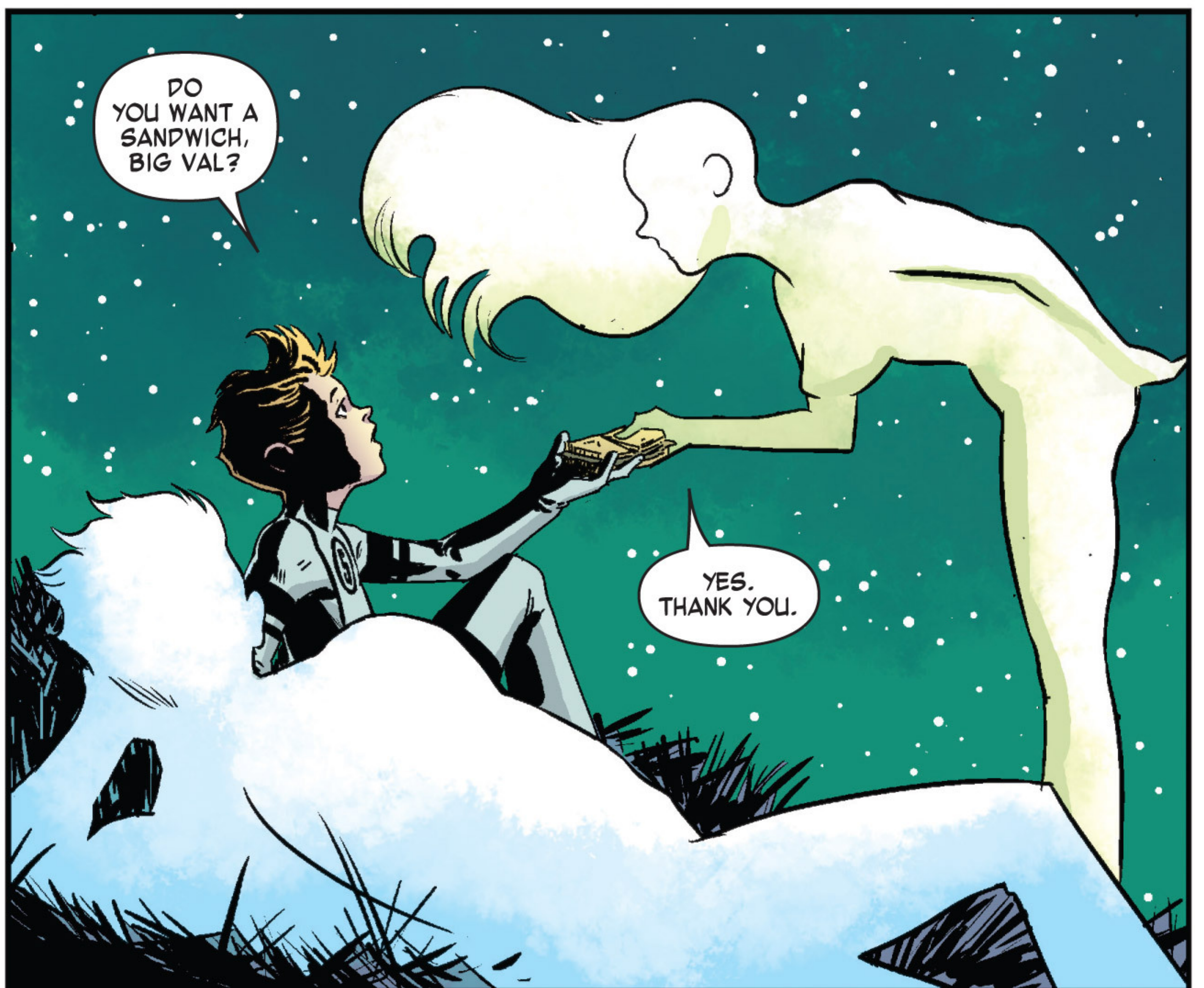
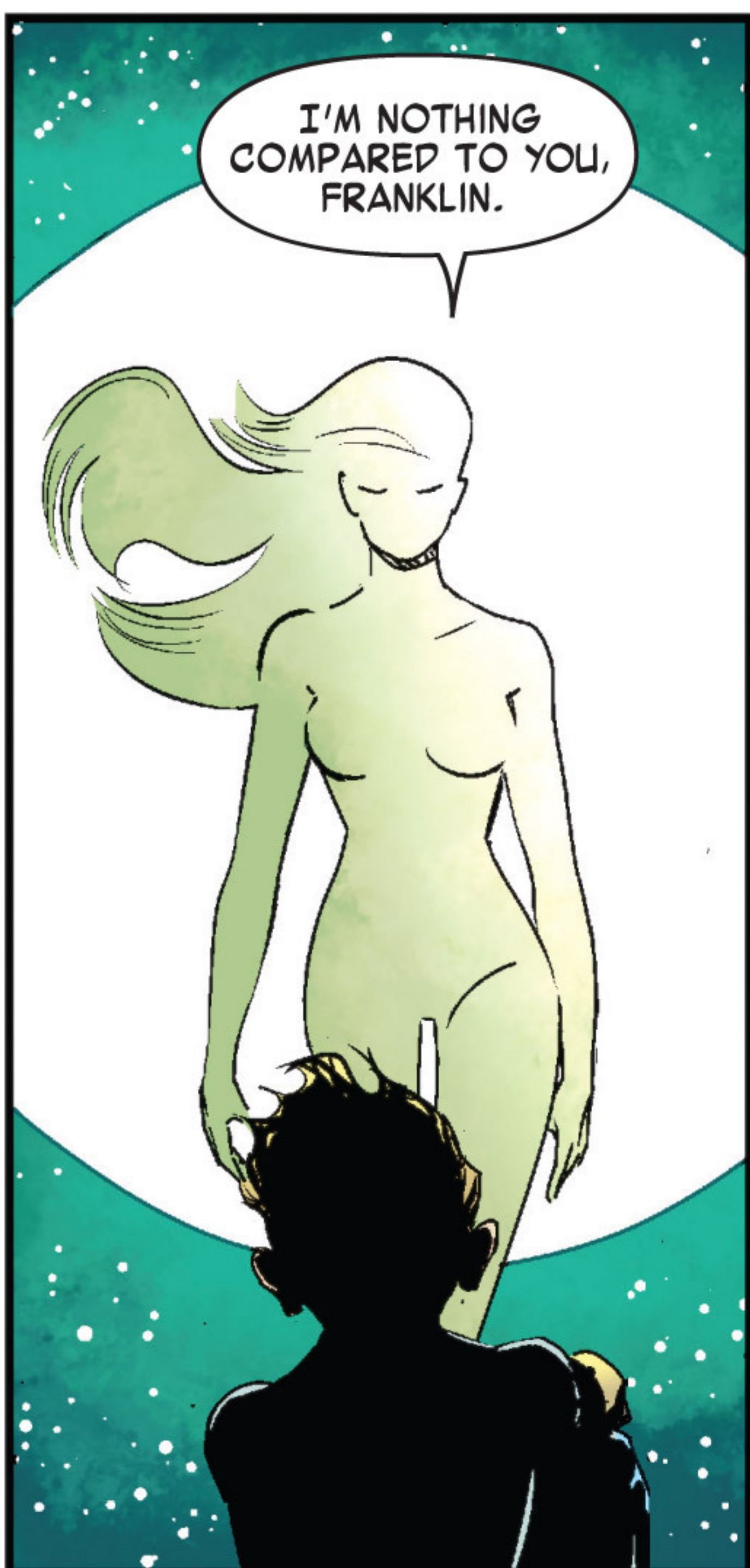
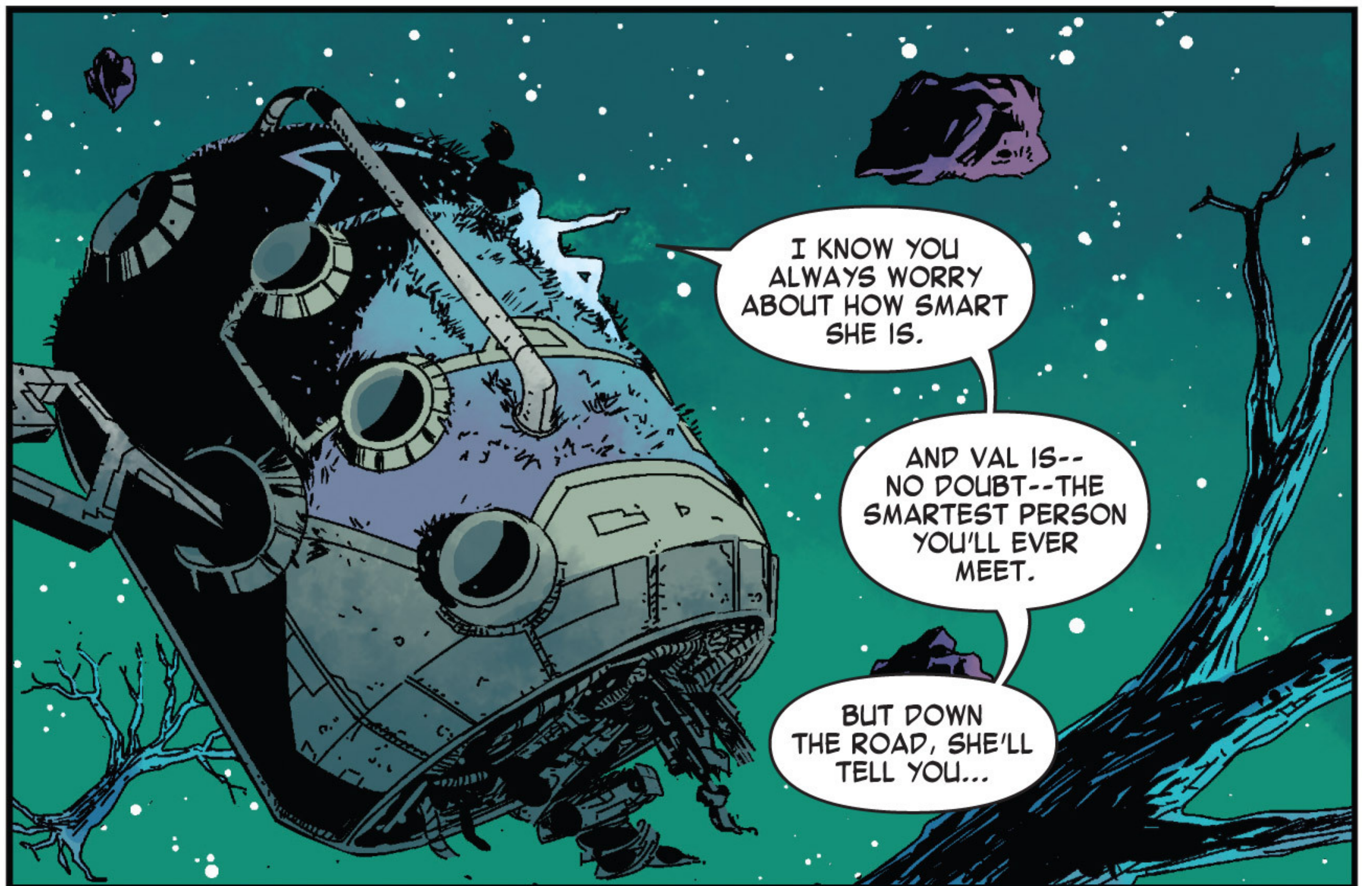
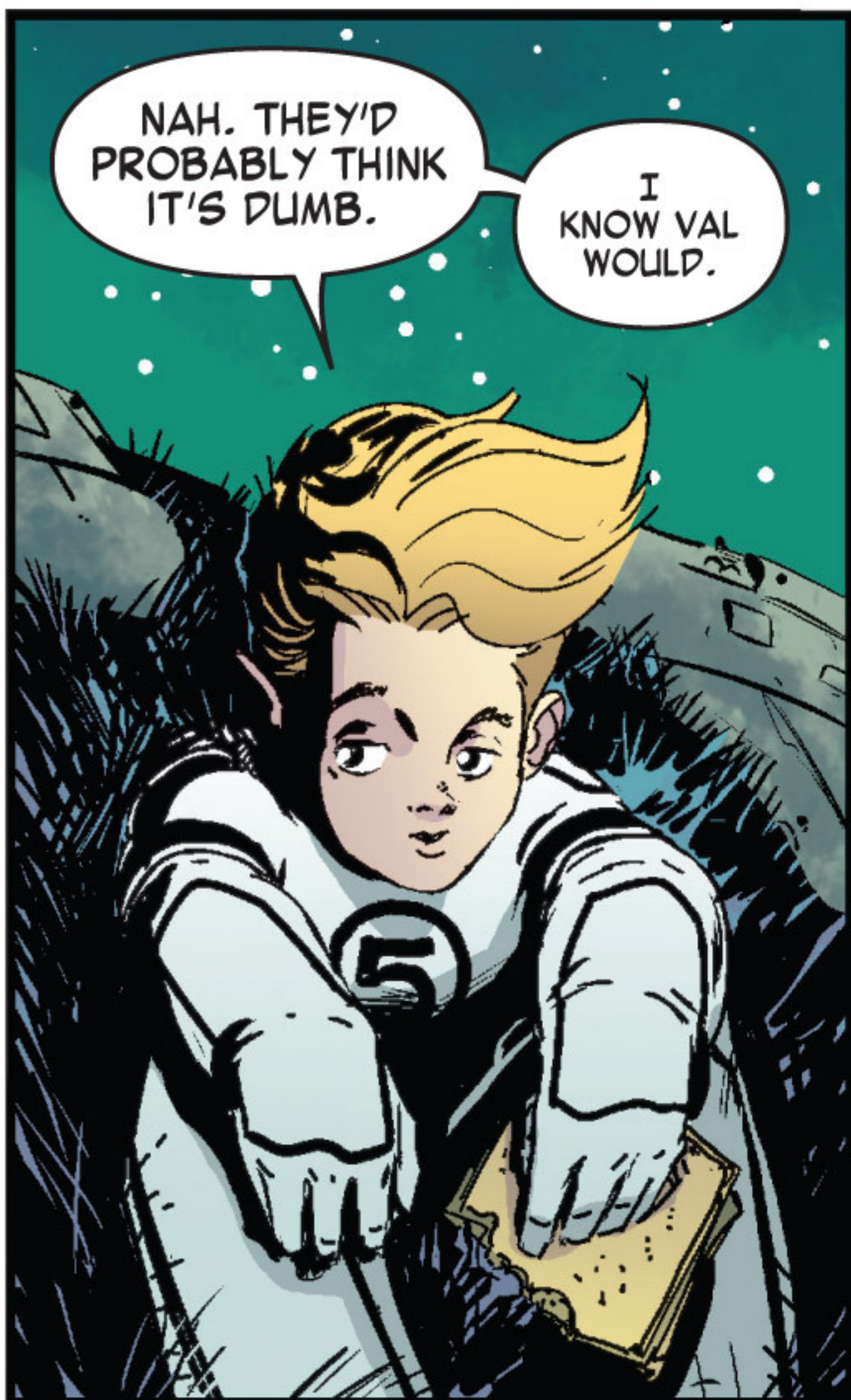


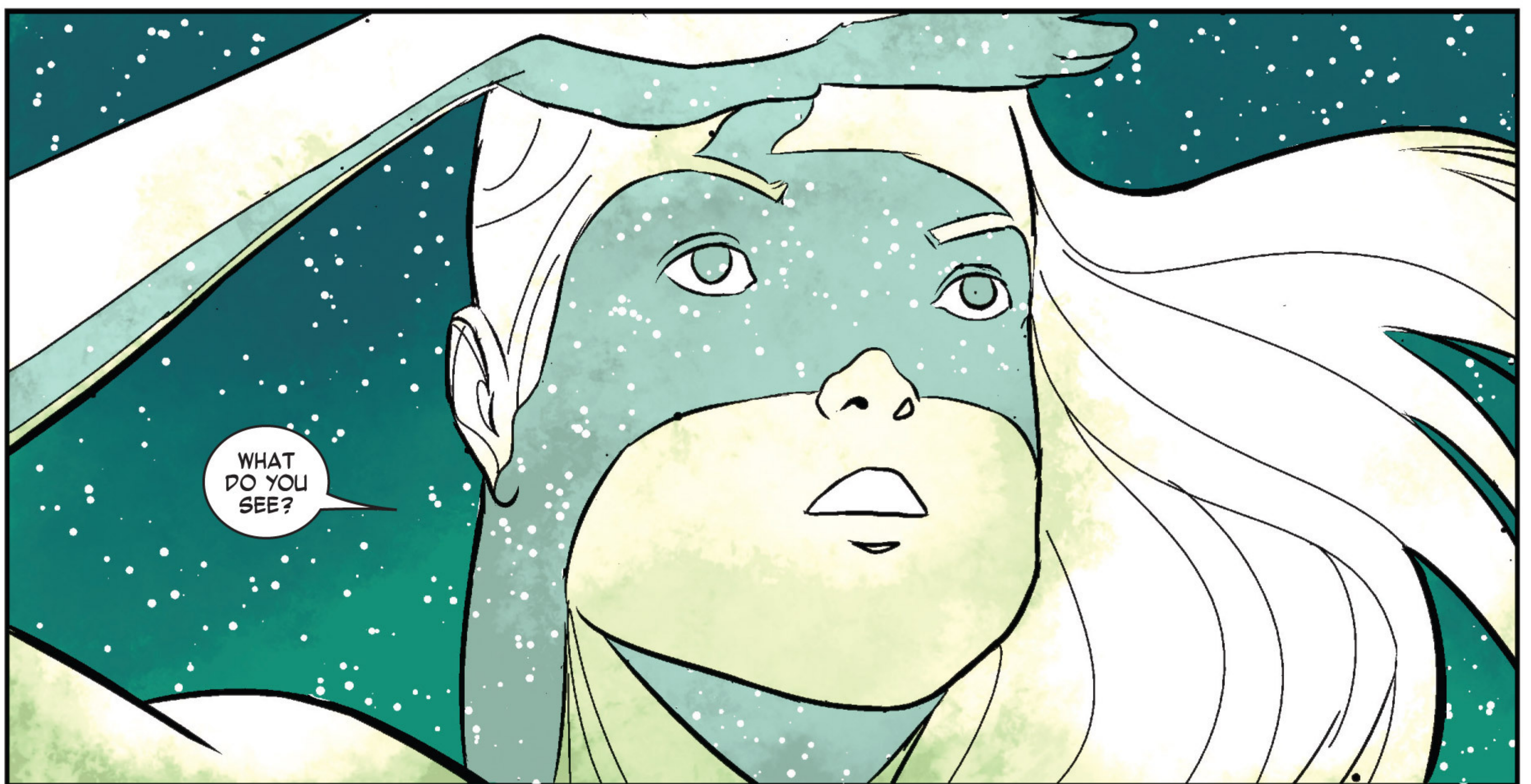
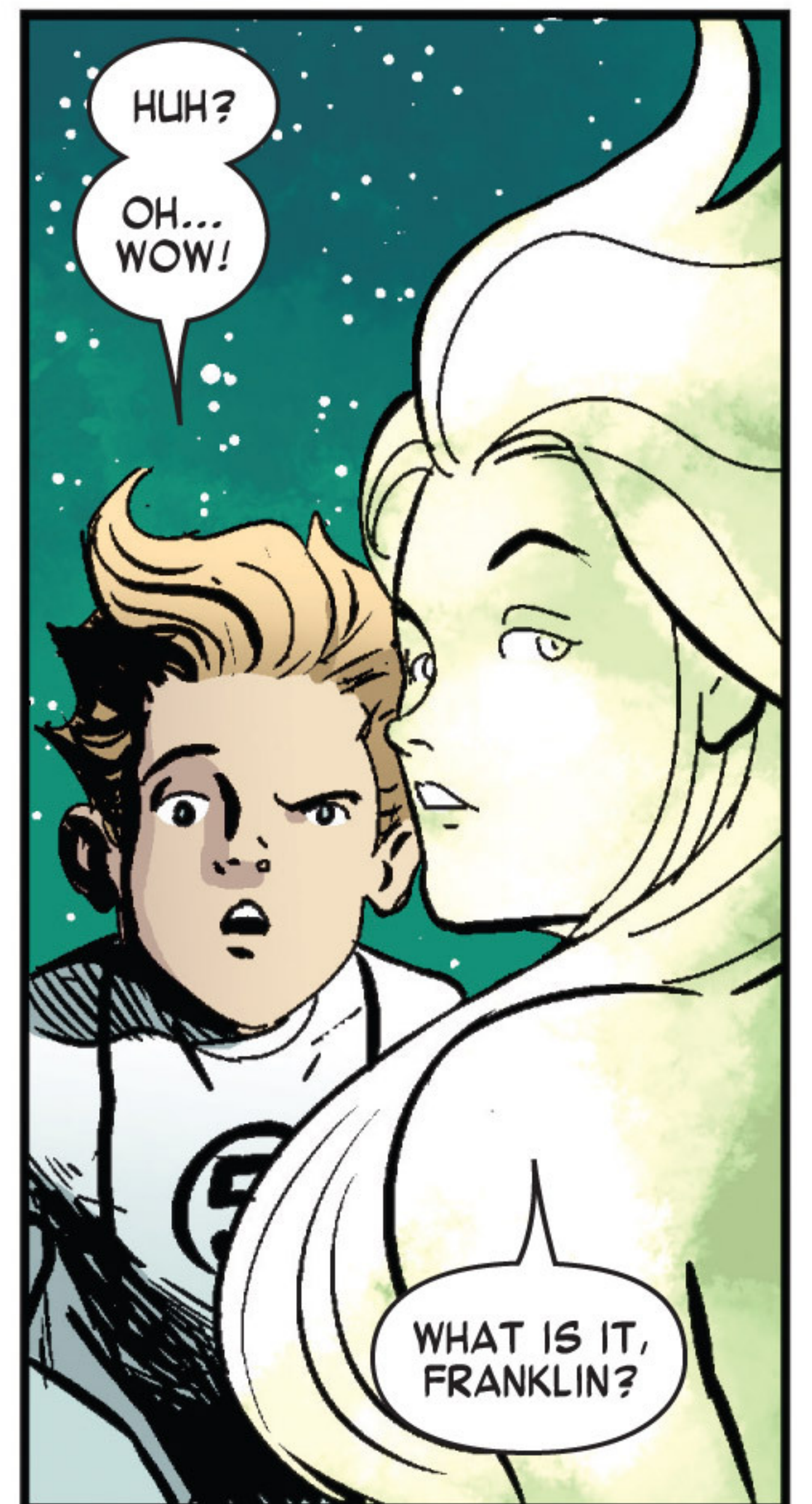
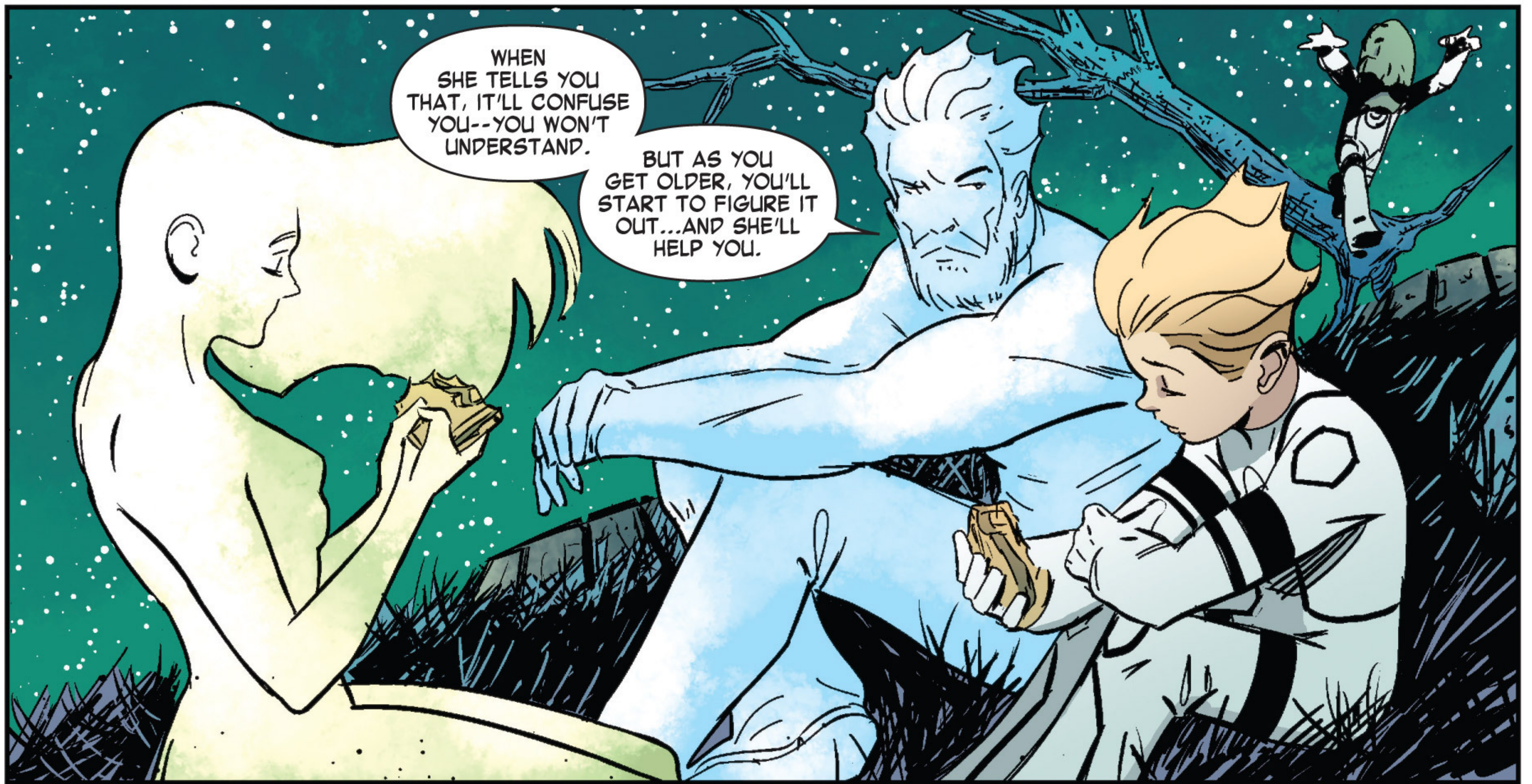














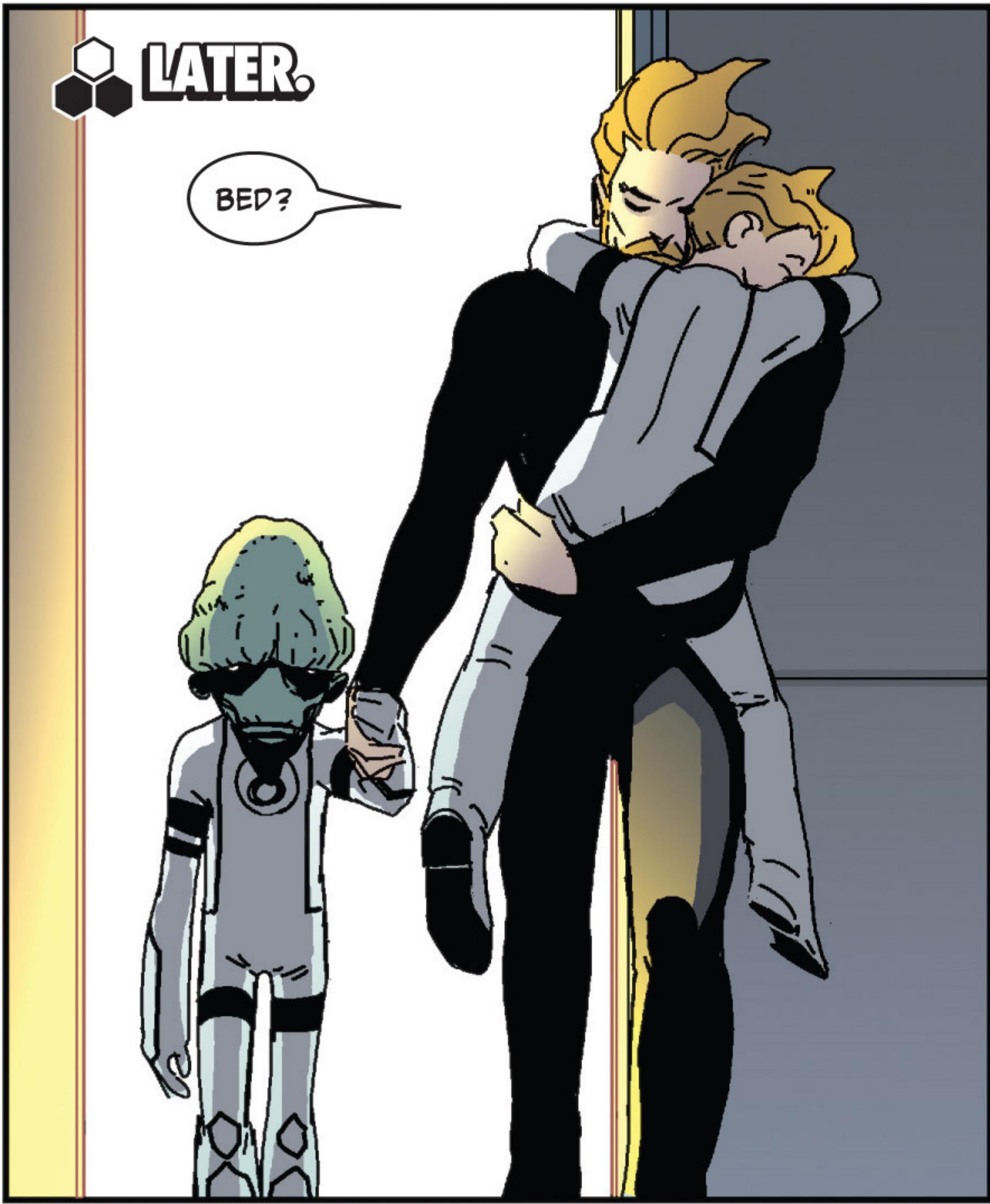
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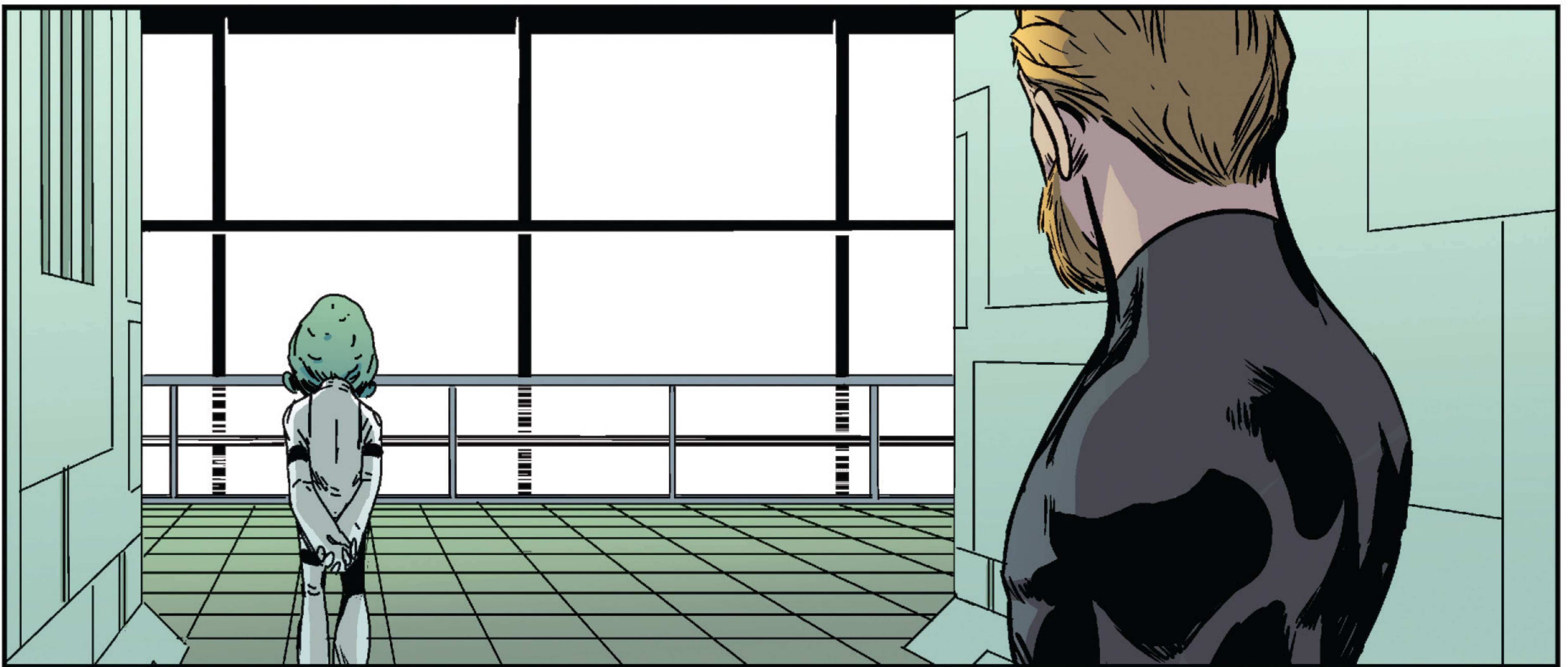
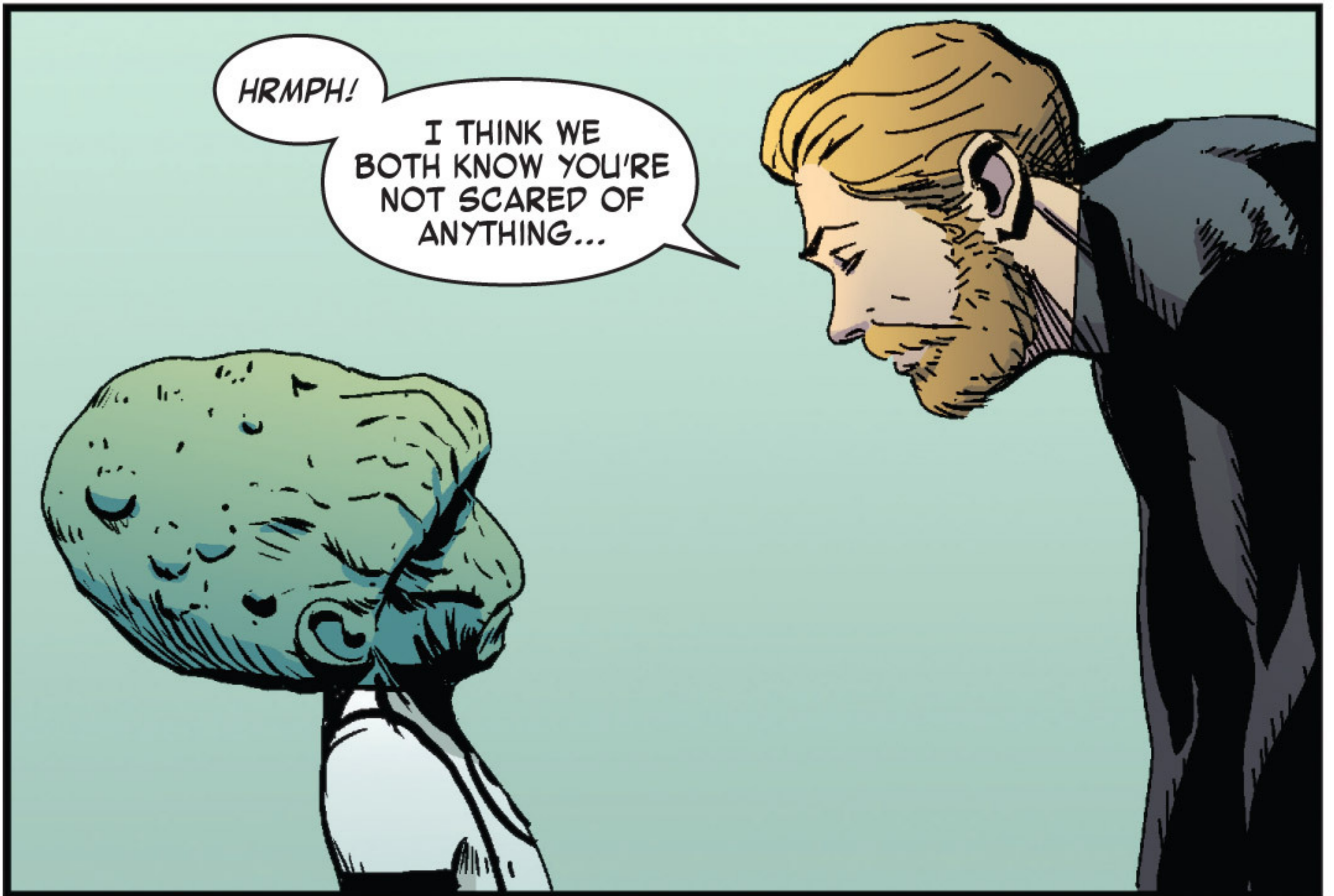
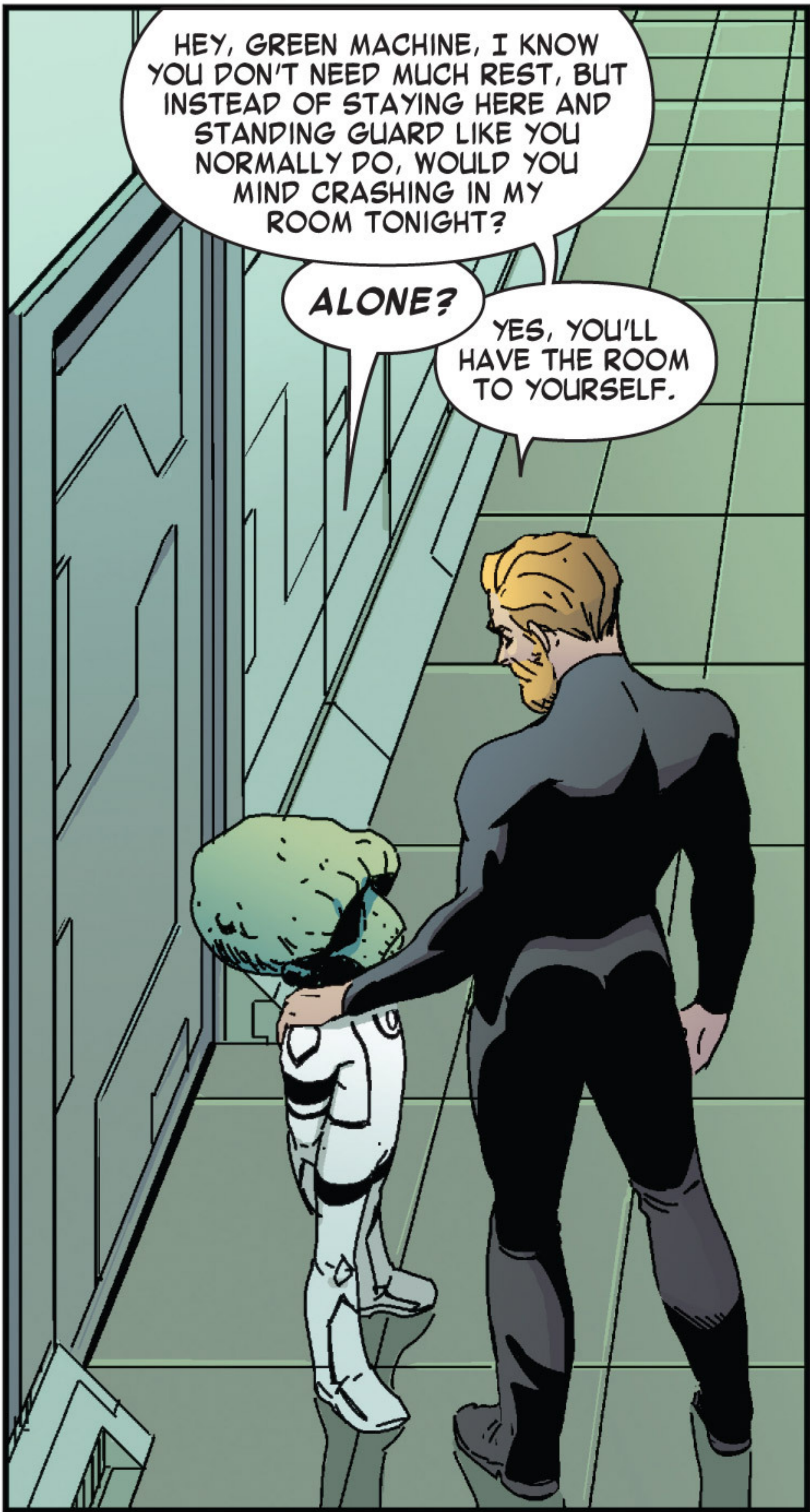
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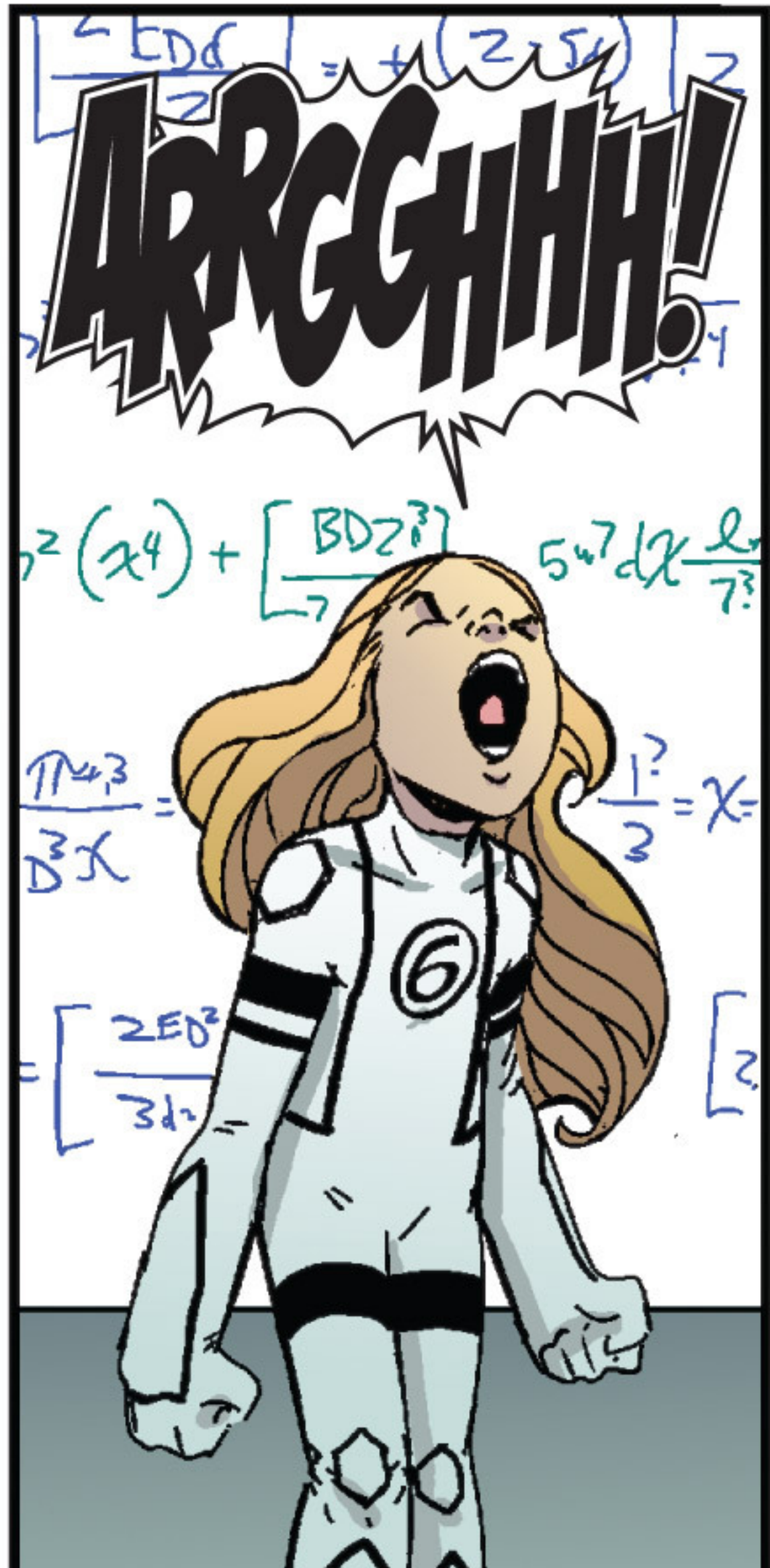
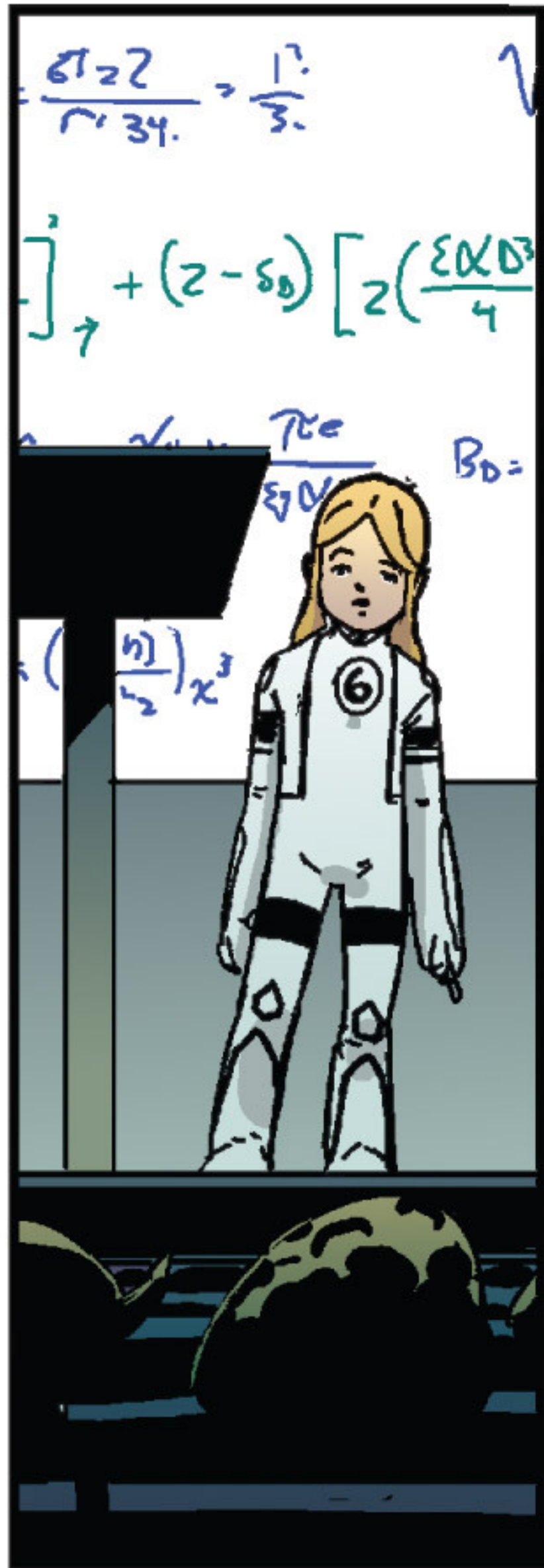
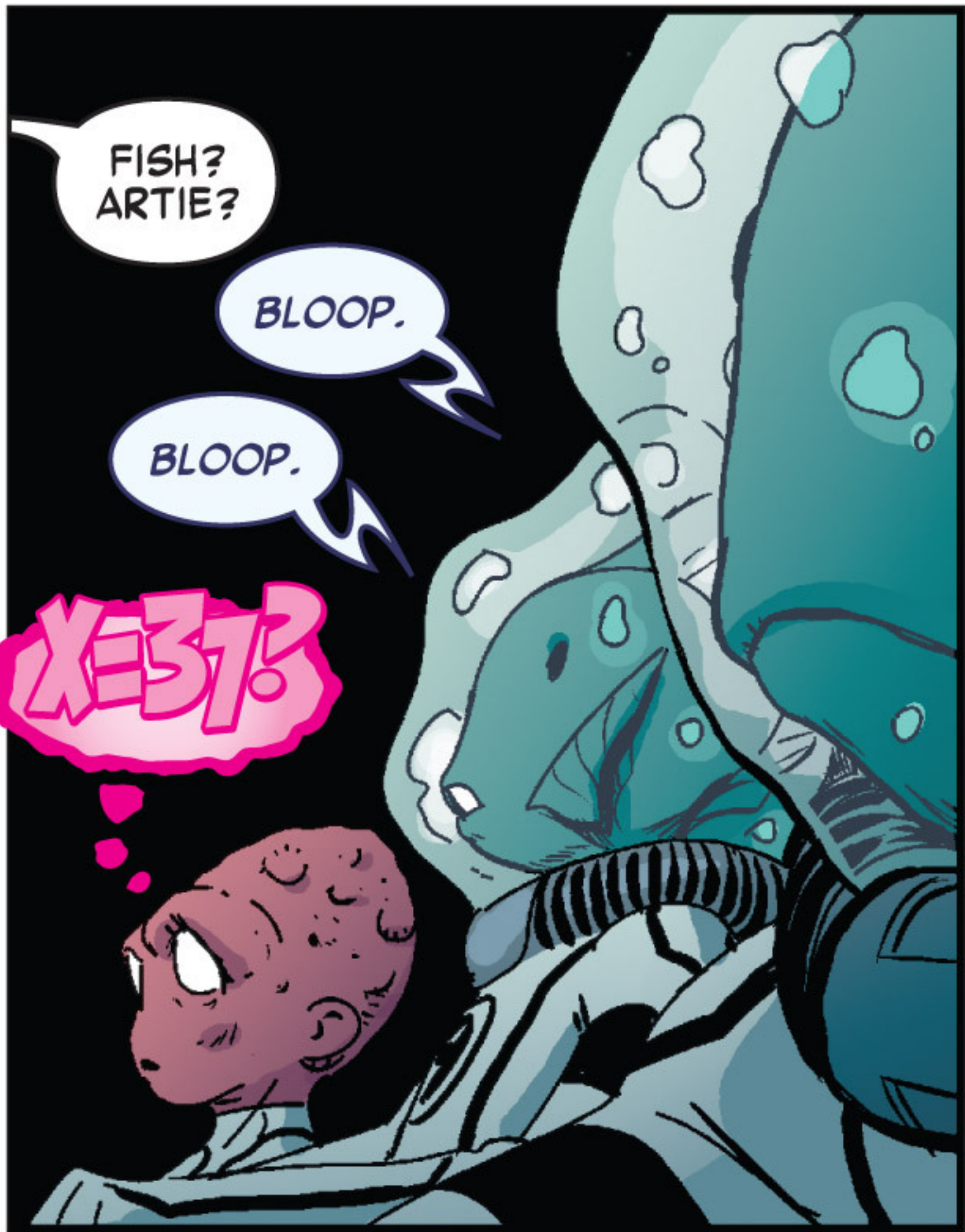
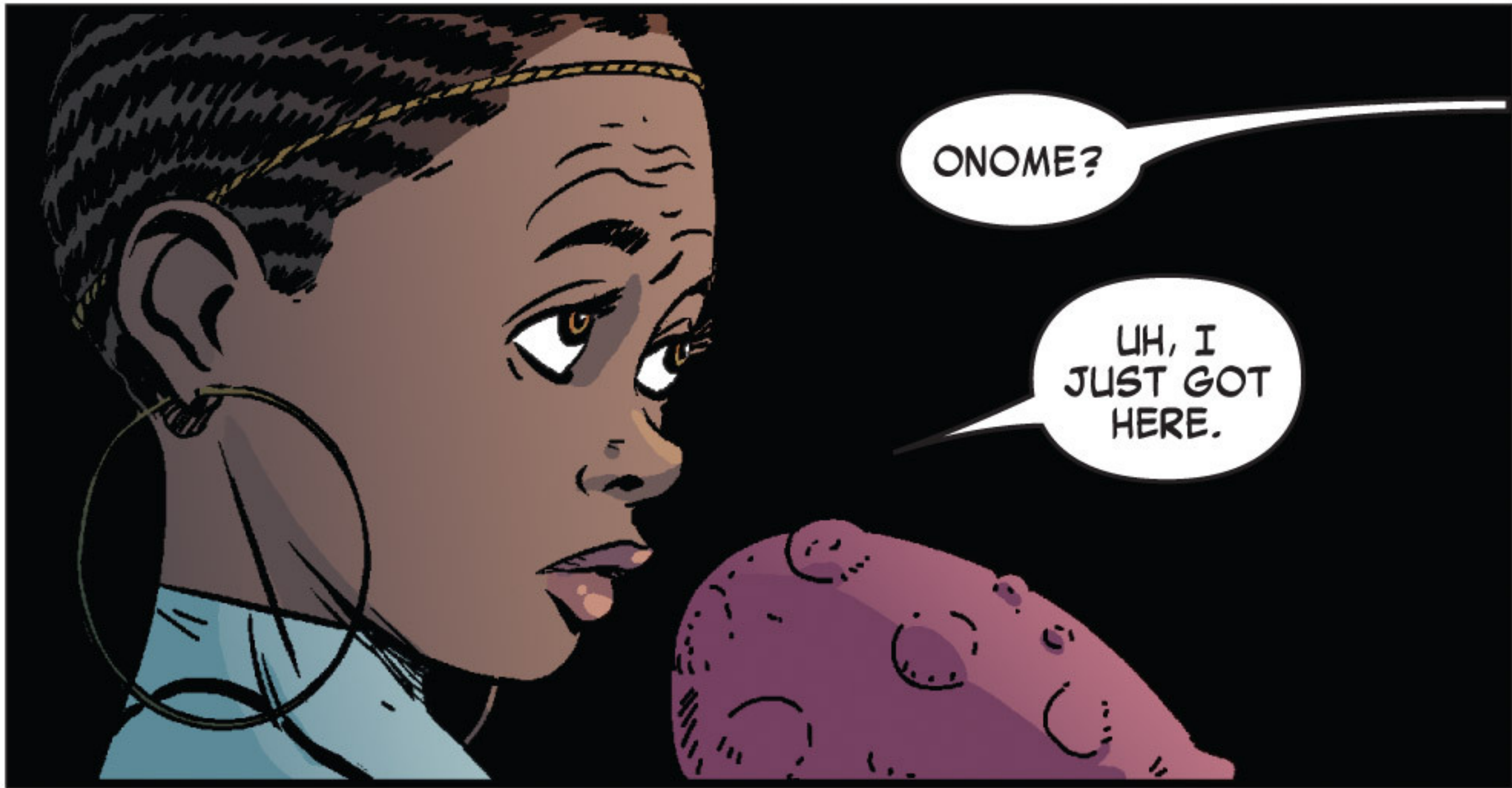
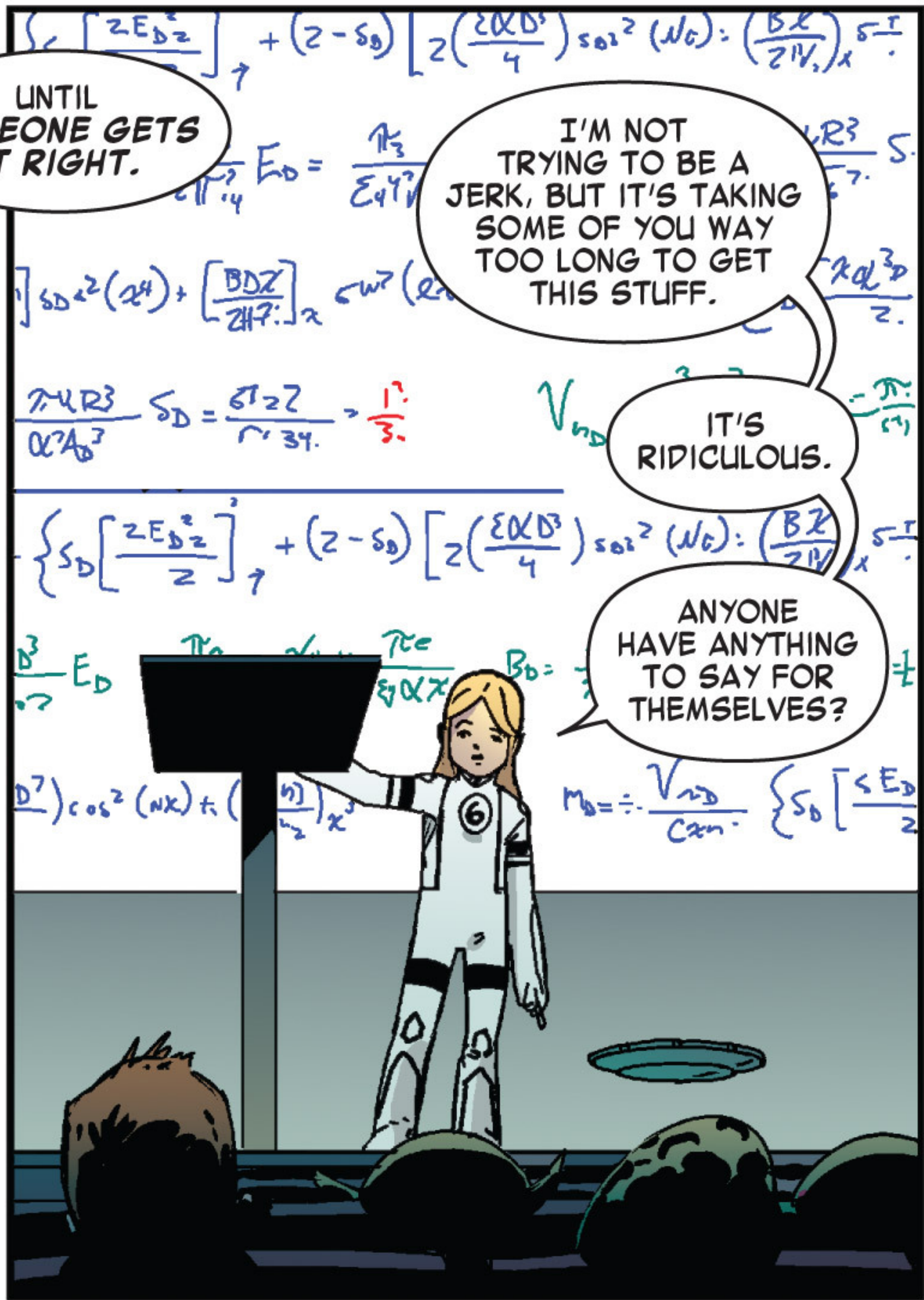
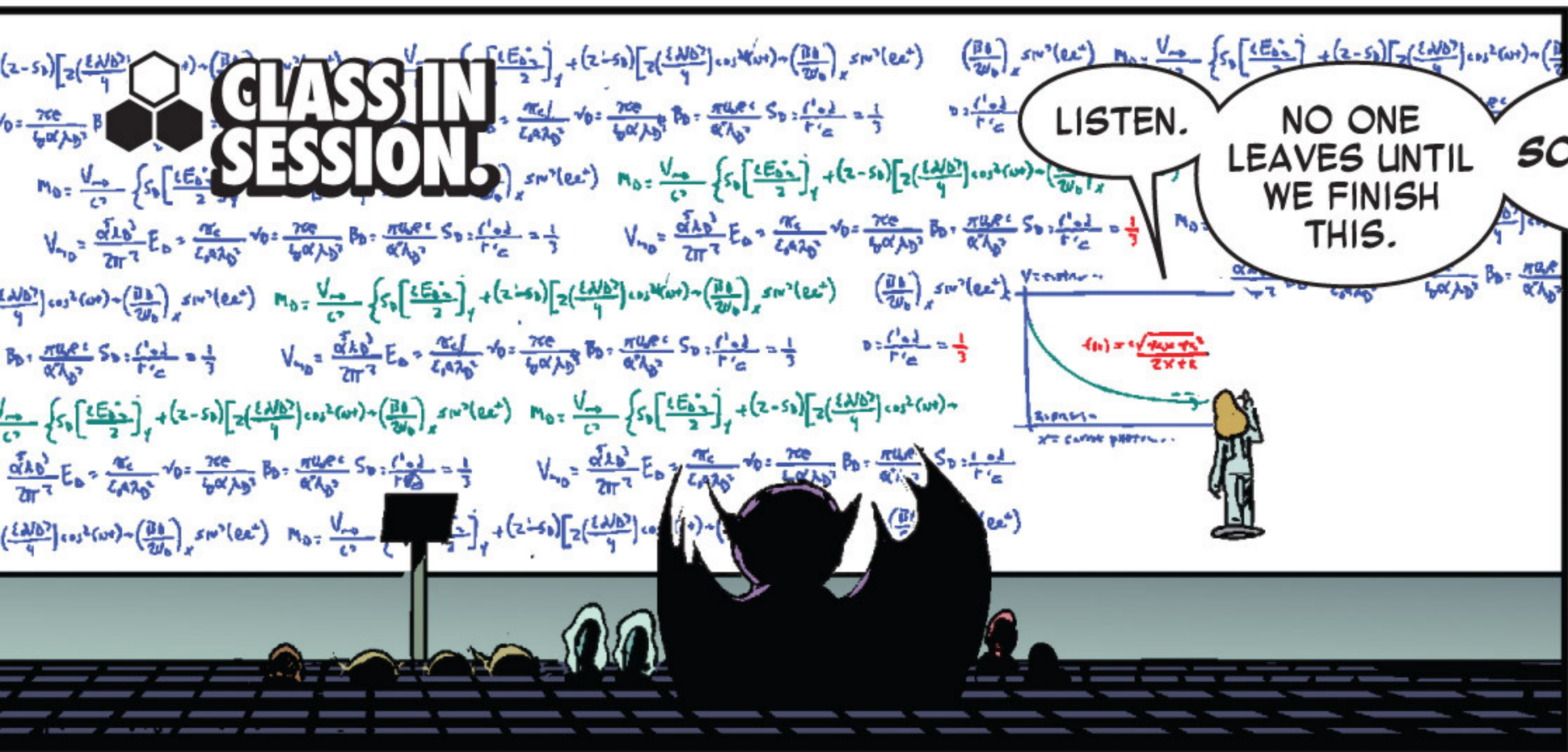
**JELL-O
KNIGHTS!**

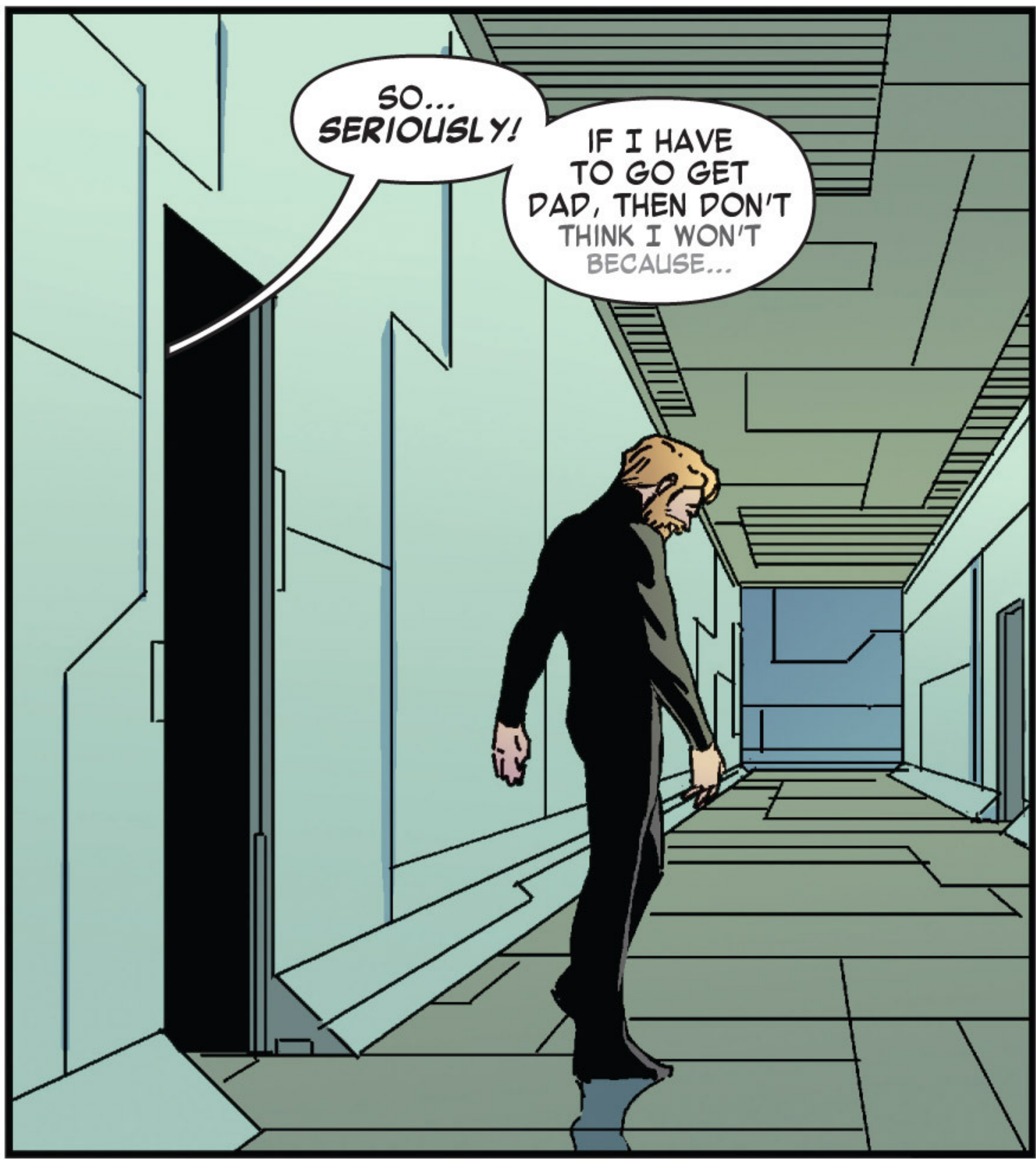
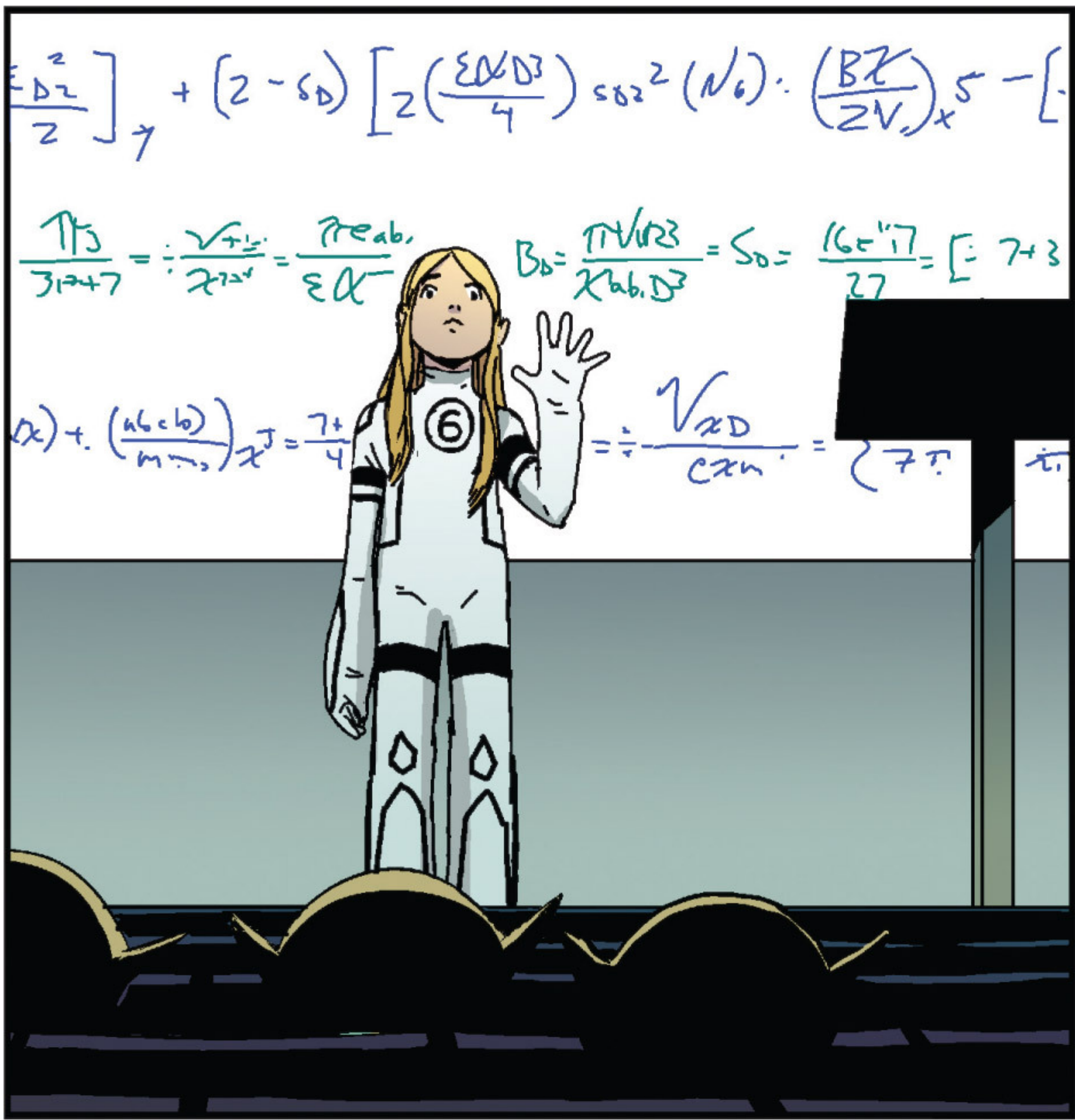
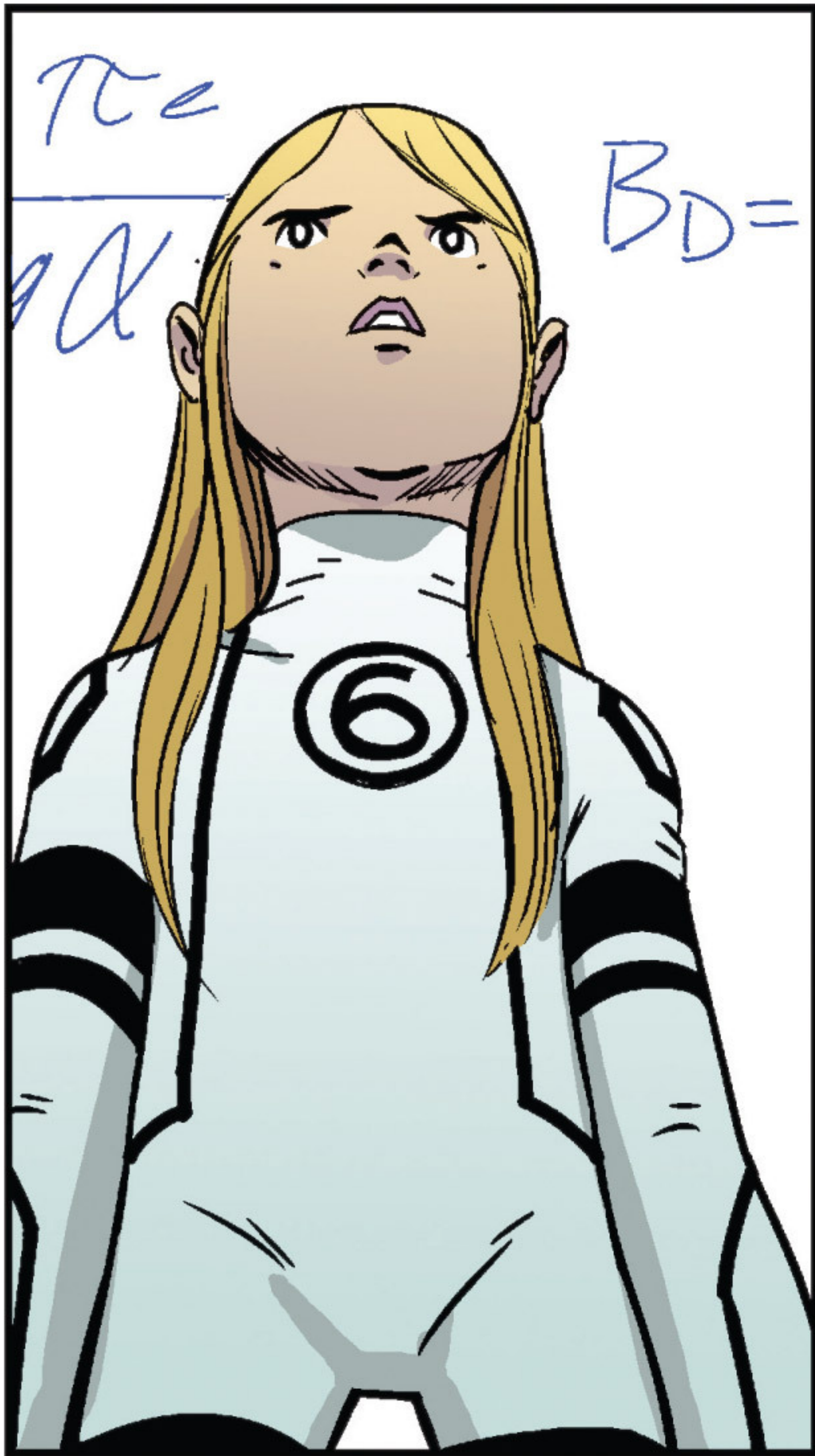
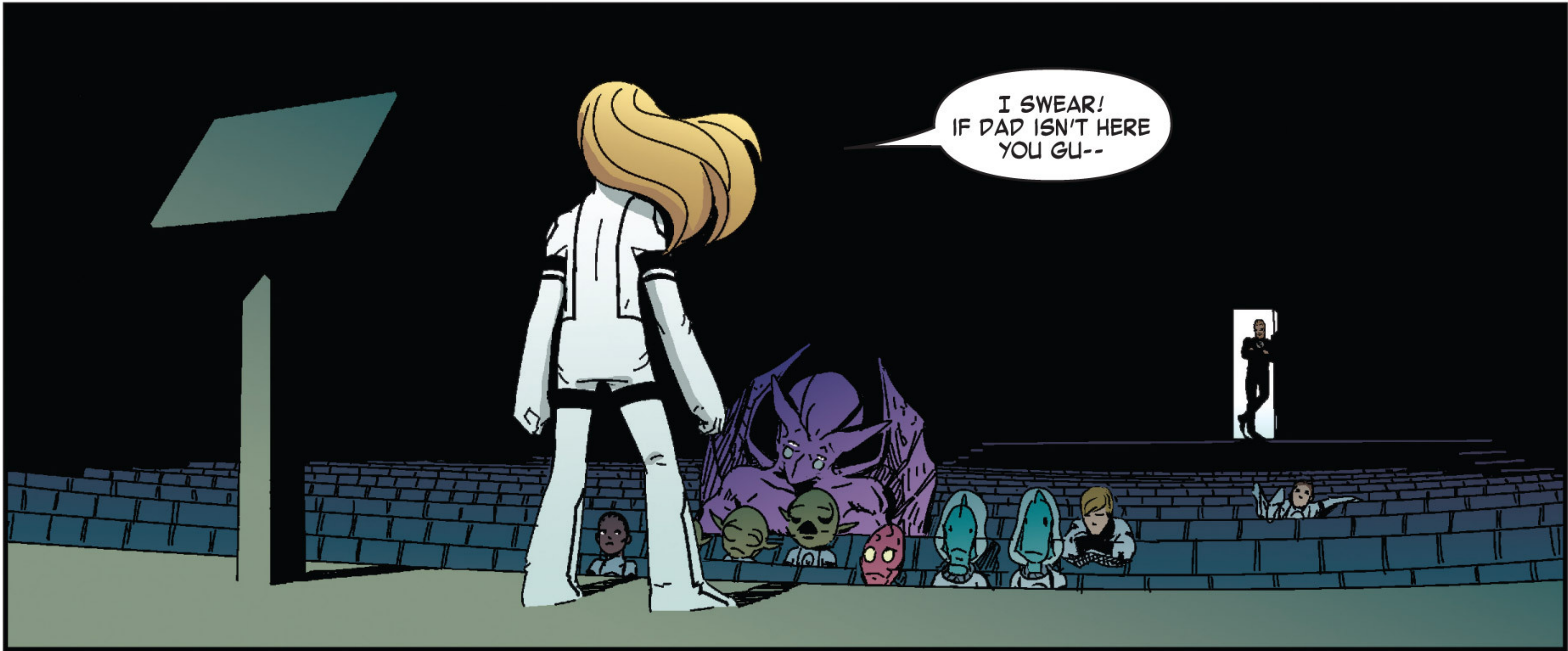


**AND ON, AND ON,
FOR WHAT SEEMS
LIKE FOREVER...**











LATER.



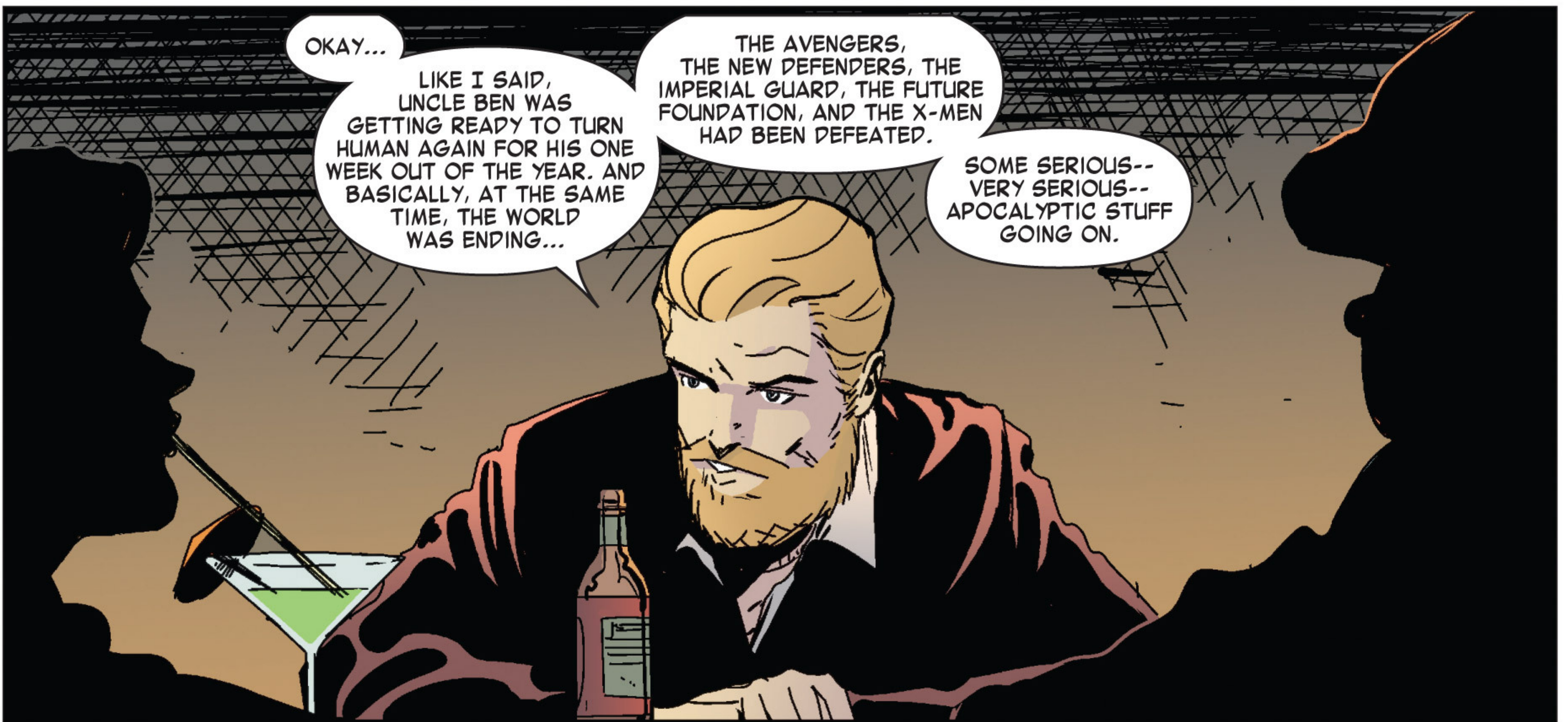
SHUT UP.
THERE IS NO
WAY...

I
SWEAR TO
GOD.



I DON'T
WANNA HEAR
ANY MORE.

OH NO,
KEEP IT COMING...
I'VE GOT TO KNOW
HOW THIS ENDS.



OKAY...

LIKE I SAID,
UNCLE BEN WAS
GETTING READY TO TURN
HUMAN AGAIN FOR HIS ONE
WEEK OUT OF THE YEAR. AND
BASICALLY, AT THE SAME
TIME, THE WORLD
WAS ENDING...

THE AVENGERS,
THE NEW DEFENDERS, THE
IMPERIAL GUARD, THE FUTURE
FOUNDATION, AND THE X-MEN
HAD BEEN DEFEATED.

SOME SERIOUS--
VERY SERIOUS--
APOCALYPTIC STUFF
GOING ON.

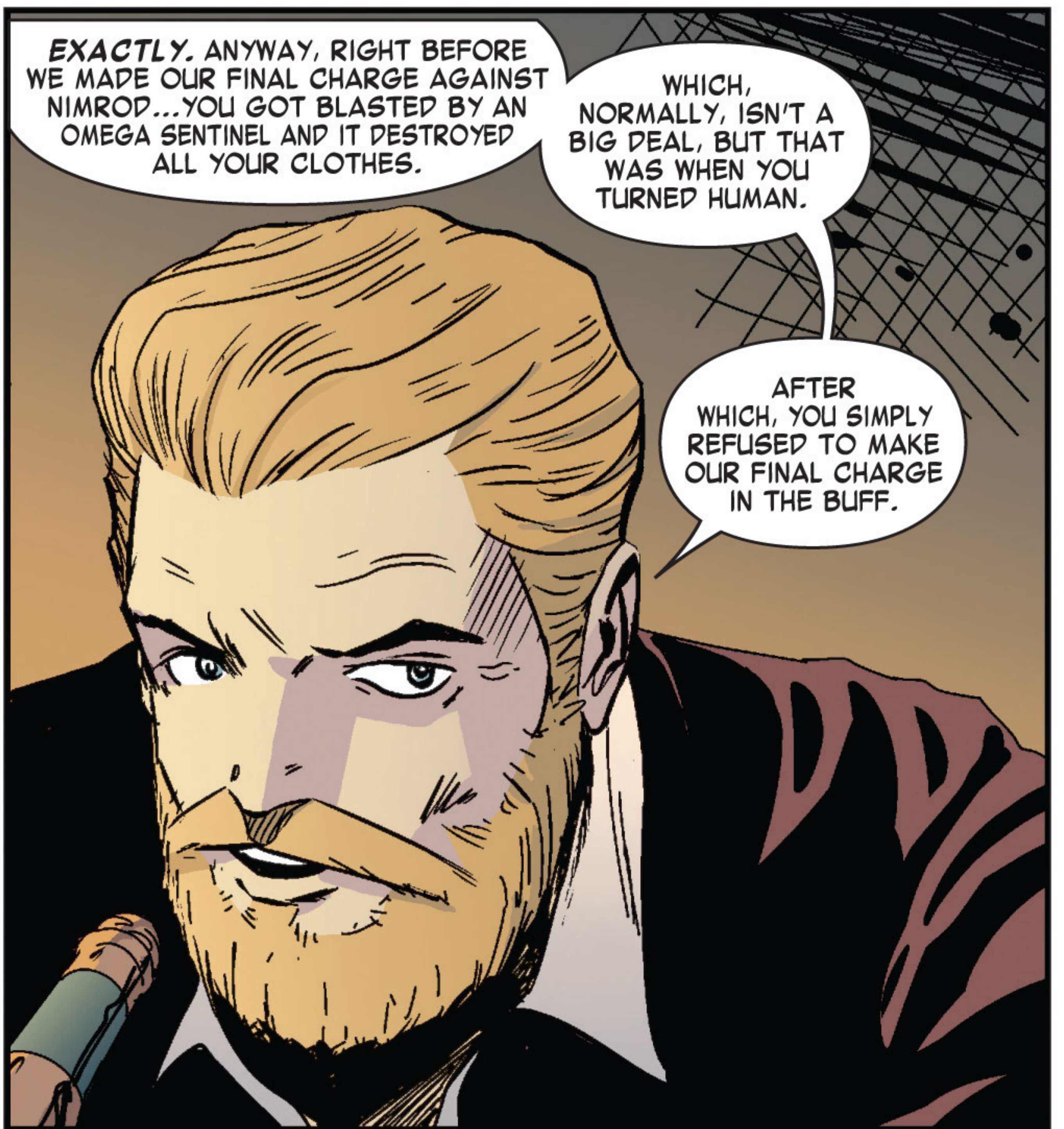


MOM WAS PART-TIMING AS AN AVENGER
AT THE TIME, SO SHE WAS OUT, AND DAD
HAD GONE DOWN WITH THE FOUNDATION,
SO ALL THAT WAS LEFT WERE THE THREE
OF US, LEECH AND THE IMPOSSIBLE
MAN.

SO, LET ME
JUST MAKE SURE
I'VE GOT THIS
RIGHT...

THE GREATEST
OCCASIONAL
SUPER HERO TEAM IN
THE HISTORY OF THE
WORLD AND...
YOU, BEN.

SUPER...



EXACTLY. ANYWAY, RIGHT BEFORE
WE MADE OUR FINAL CHARGE AGAINST
NIMROD...YOU GOT BLASTED BY AN
OMEGA SENTINEL AND IT DESTROYED
ALL YOUR CLOTHES.

WHICH,
NORMALLY, ISN'T A
BIG DEAL, BUT THAT
WAS WHEN YOU
TURNED HUMAN.

AFTER
WHICH, YOU SIMPLY
REFUSED TO MAKE
OUR FINAL CHARGE
IN THE BUFF.



MAKES SENSE...I'VE SEEN YOU NAKED.

UH-HUH. BUT, DUE TO SOME FAST THINKING, YOU OVERCAME THAT OBSTACLE AND SAVED THE WORLD, BEN.

TOO BAD YOU HAD TO DO IT WEARING THE IMPOSSIBLE MAN AS PANTS.

OH, GOD... IT'S WORSE THAN I THOUGHT.

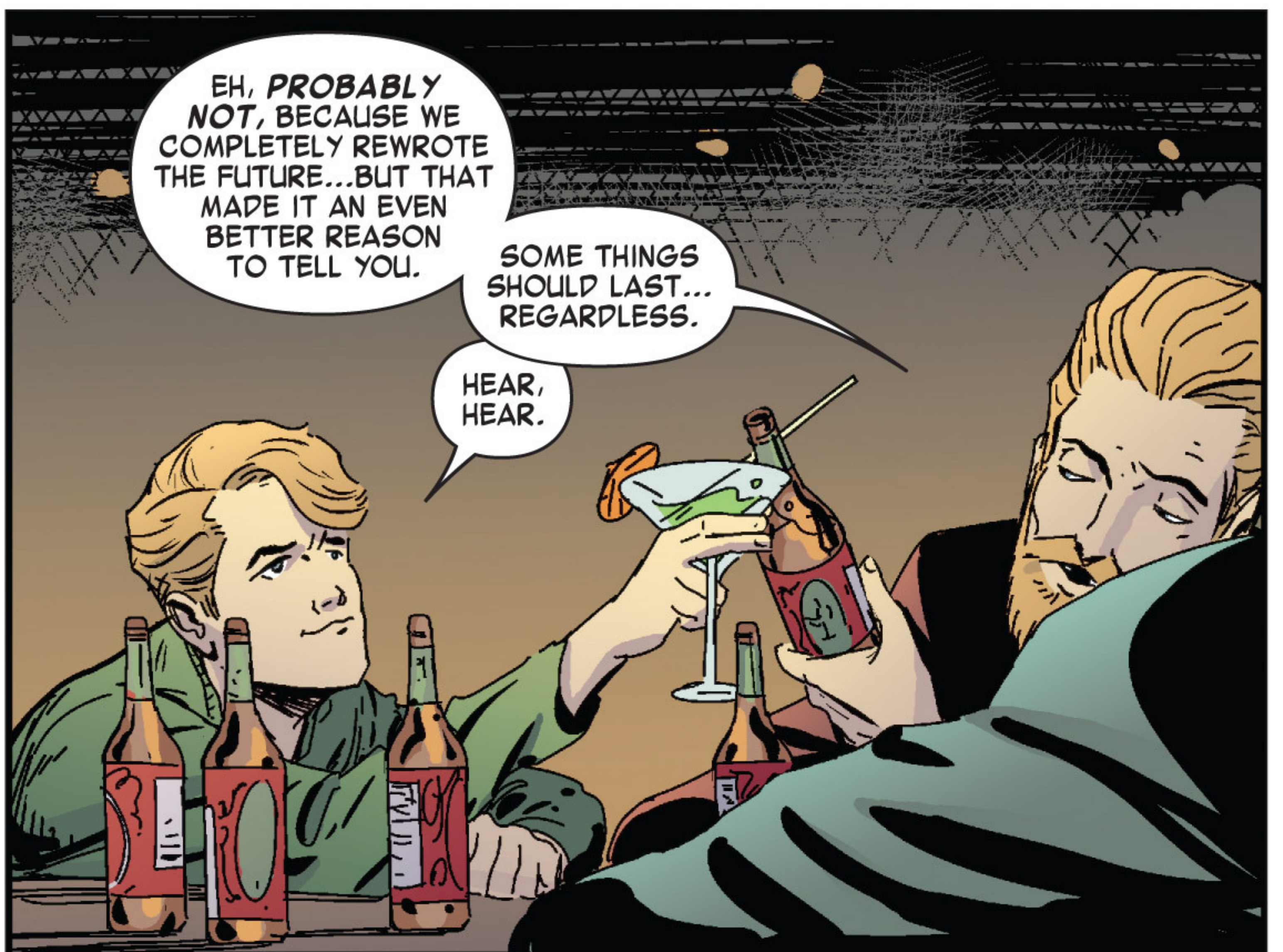
HA! HA! HA!



AND THAT WAS THE LAST RIDE OF THE FRANKTASTIC FOUR.

AND ACTUALLY, THAT WAS THE LAST ANYONE EVER SAW OF THE IMPOSSIBLE MAN.

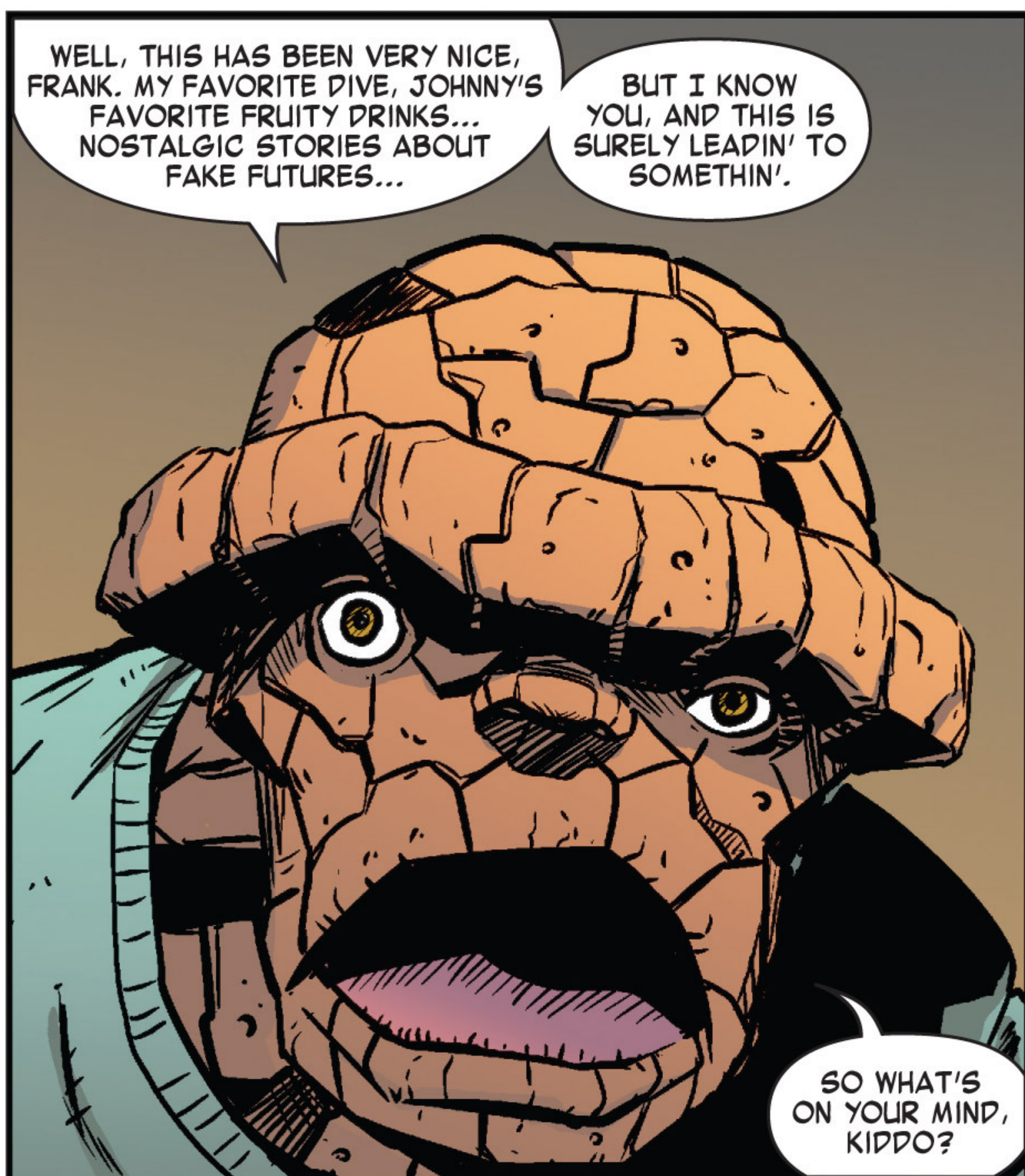
OH, MAN. I LOVE THAT THIS IS GOING TO HAPPEN.



EH, PROBABLY NOT, BECAUSE WE COMPLETELY REWROTE THE FUTURE...BUT THAT MADE IT AN EVEN BETTER REASON TO TELL YOU.

SOME THINGS SHOULD LAST... REGARDLESS.

HEAR, HEAR.



WELL, THIS HAS BEEN VERY NICE, FRANK. MY FAVORITE DIVE, JOHNNY'S FAVORITE FRUITY DRINKS... NOSTALGIC STORIES ABOUT FAKE FUTURES...

BUT I KNOW YOU, AND THIS IS SURELY LEADIN' TO SOMETHIN'.

SO WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND, KIDDO?



FAREWELLS, UNCLE BEN.

GOODBYES.

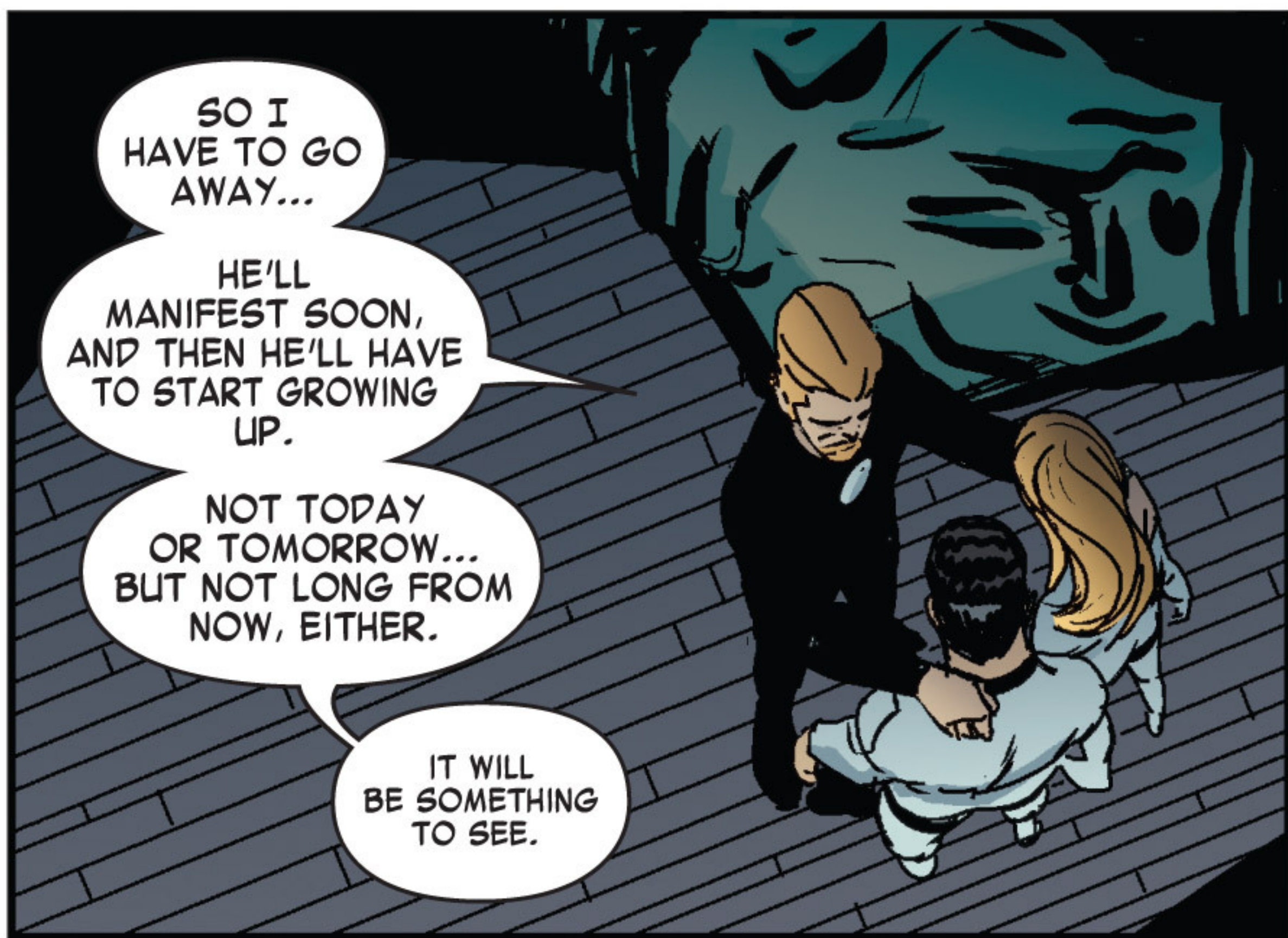




LIKE ANY SOCIETY, OR OTHER
LARGE HYPER-COMPLEX
ORGANISM, THE *UNIVERSE*
IS *SENTIENT*.

AND IT WILL
FREAK *HER* OUT IF
SHE BECOMES AWARE
THAT THERE ARE TWO OF
ME HERE--ESPECIALLY WITH
SOME THINGS THAT ARE
GOING TO HAPPEN
SOON.

IT IMPLIES
UNTIMELY
THINGS.

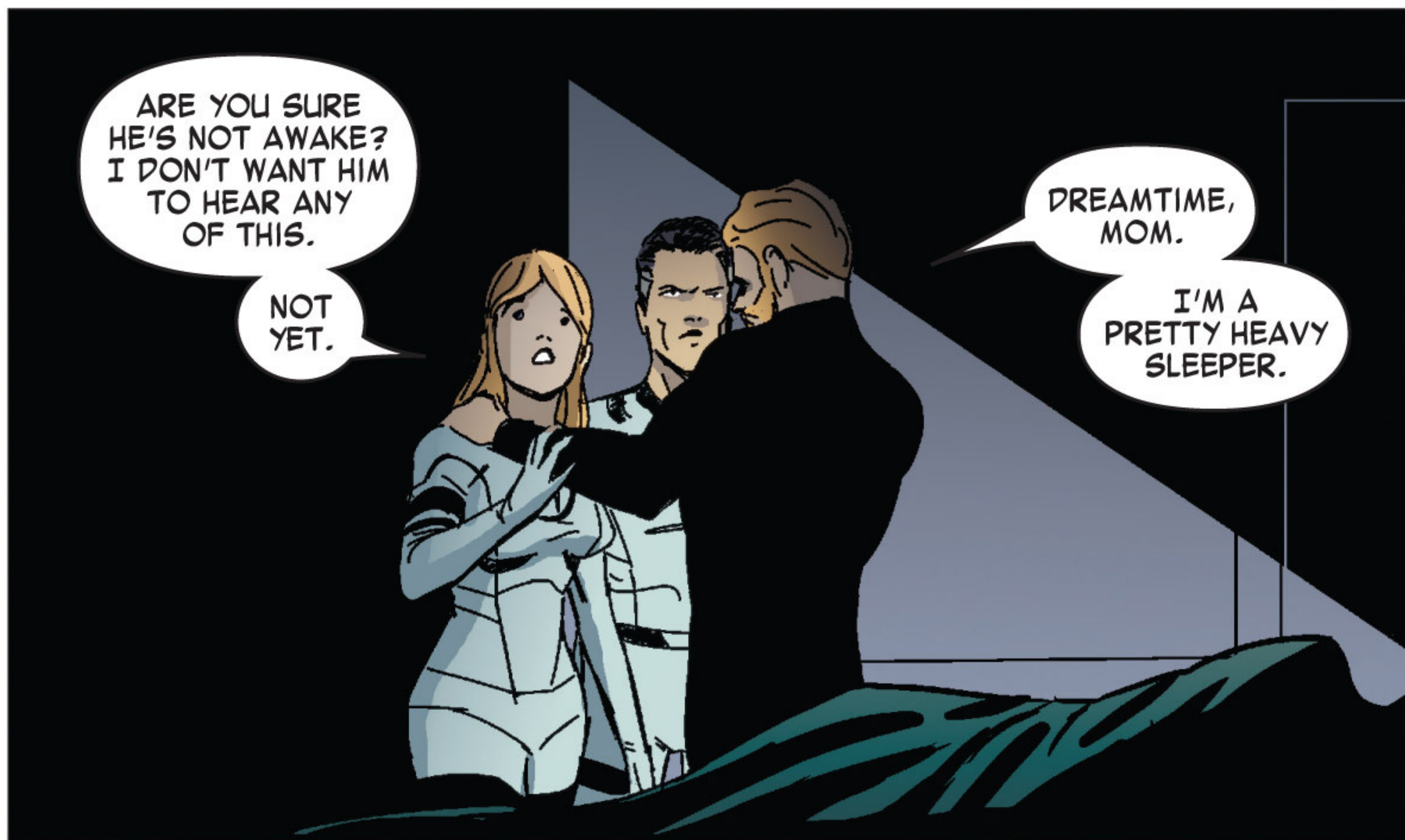


SO I
HAVE TO GO
AWAY...

HE'LL
MANIFEST SOON,
AND THEN HE'LL HAVE
TO START GROWING
UP.

NOT TODAY
OR TOMORROW...
BUT NOT LONG FROM
NOW, EITHER.

IT WILL
BE SOMETHING
TO SEE.

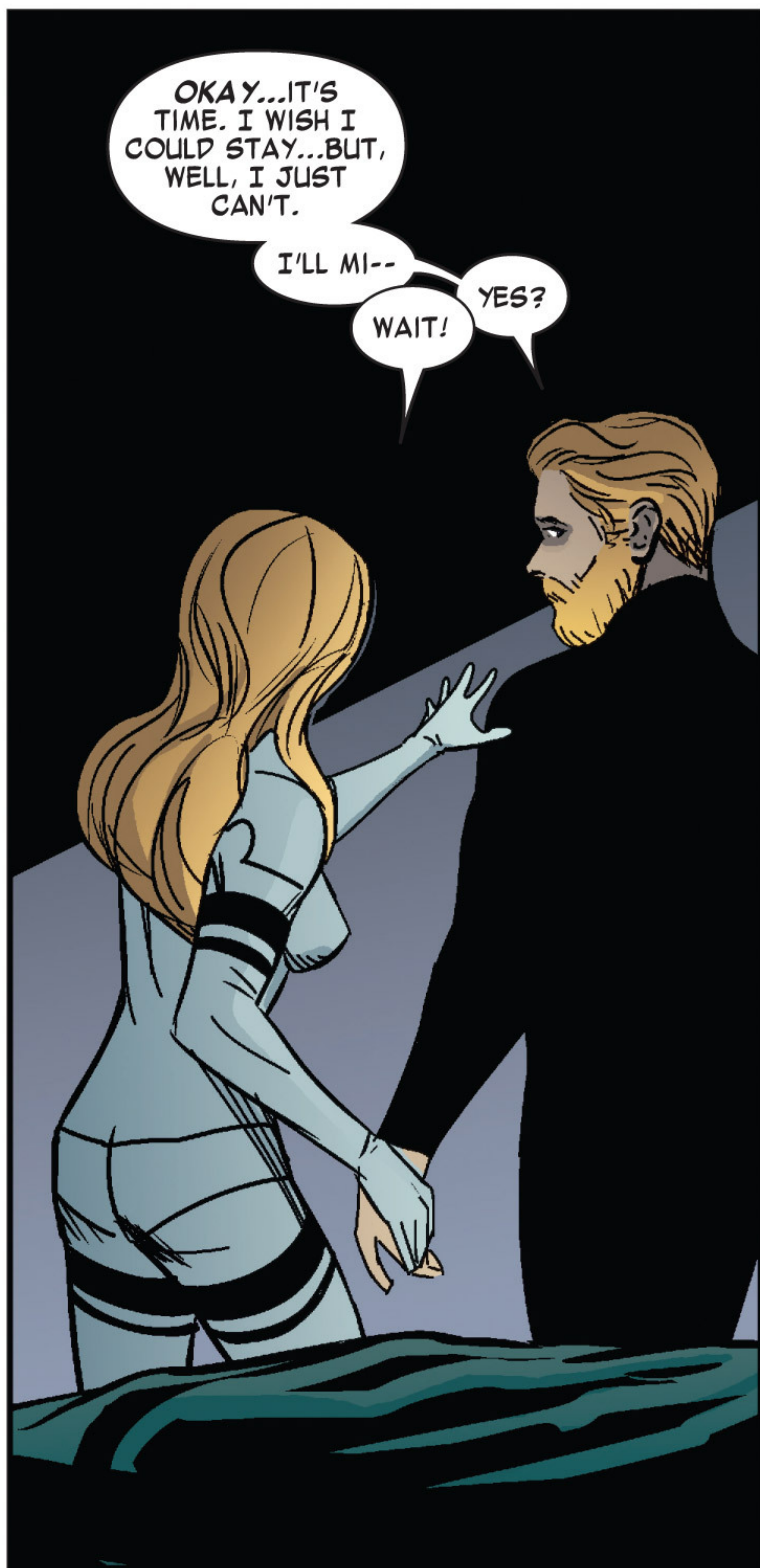
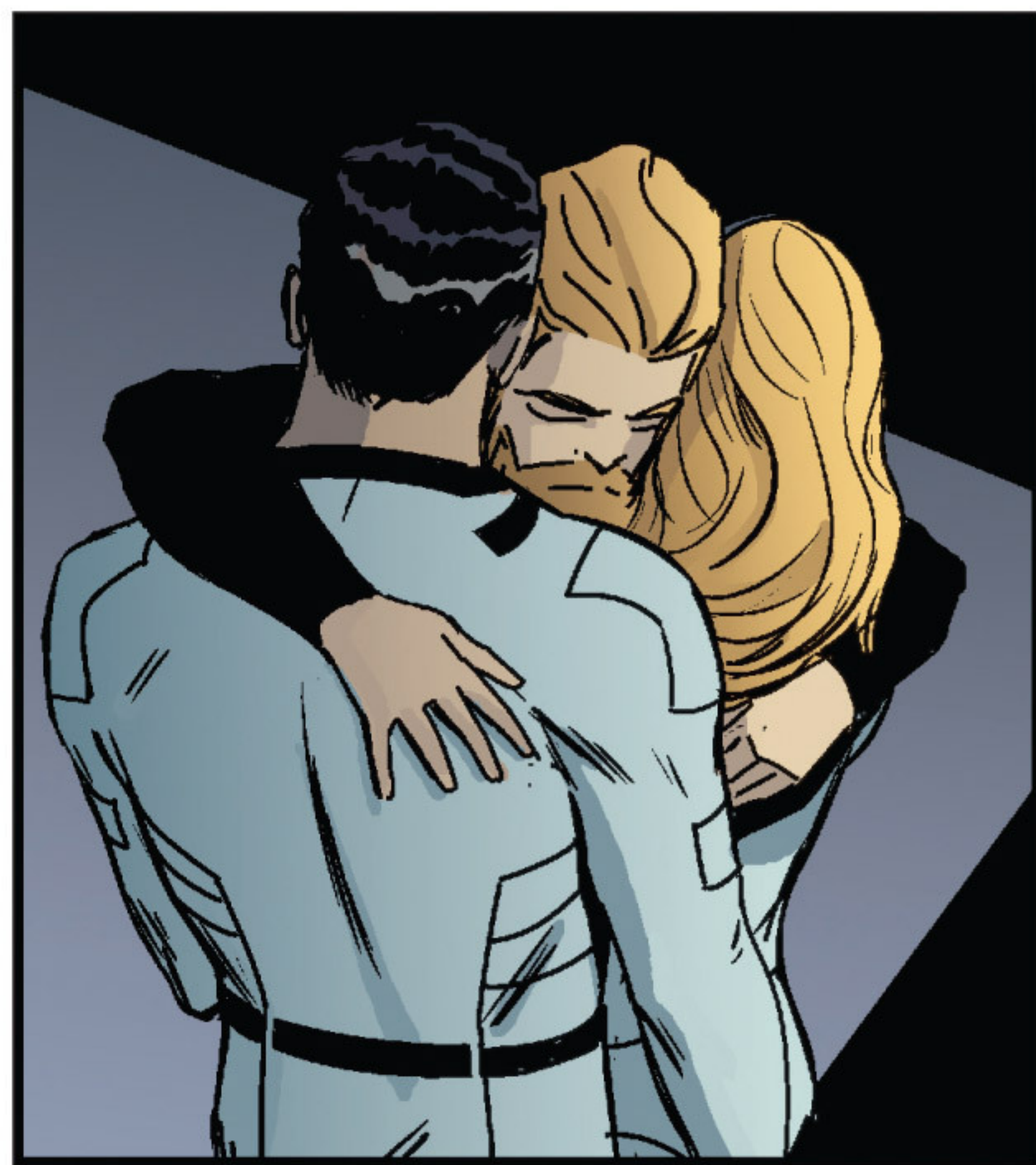


ARE YOU SURE
HE'S NOT AWAKE?
I DON'T WANT HIM
TO HEAR ANY
OF THIS.

NOT
YET.

DREAMTIME,
MOM.

I'M A
PRETTY HEAVY
SLEEPER.

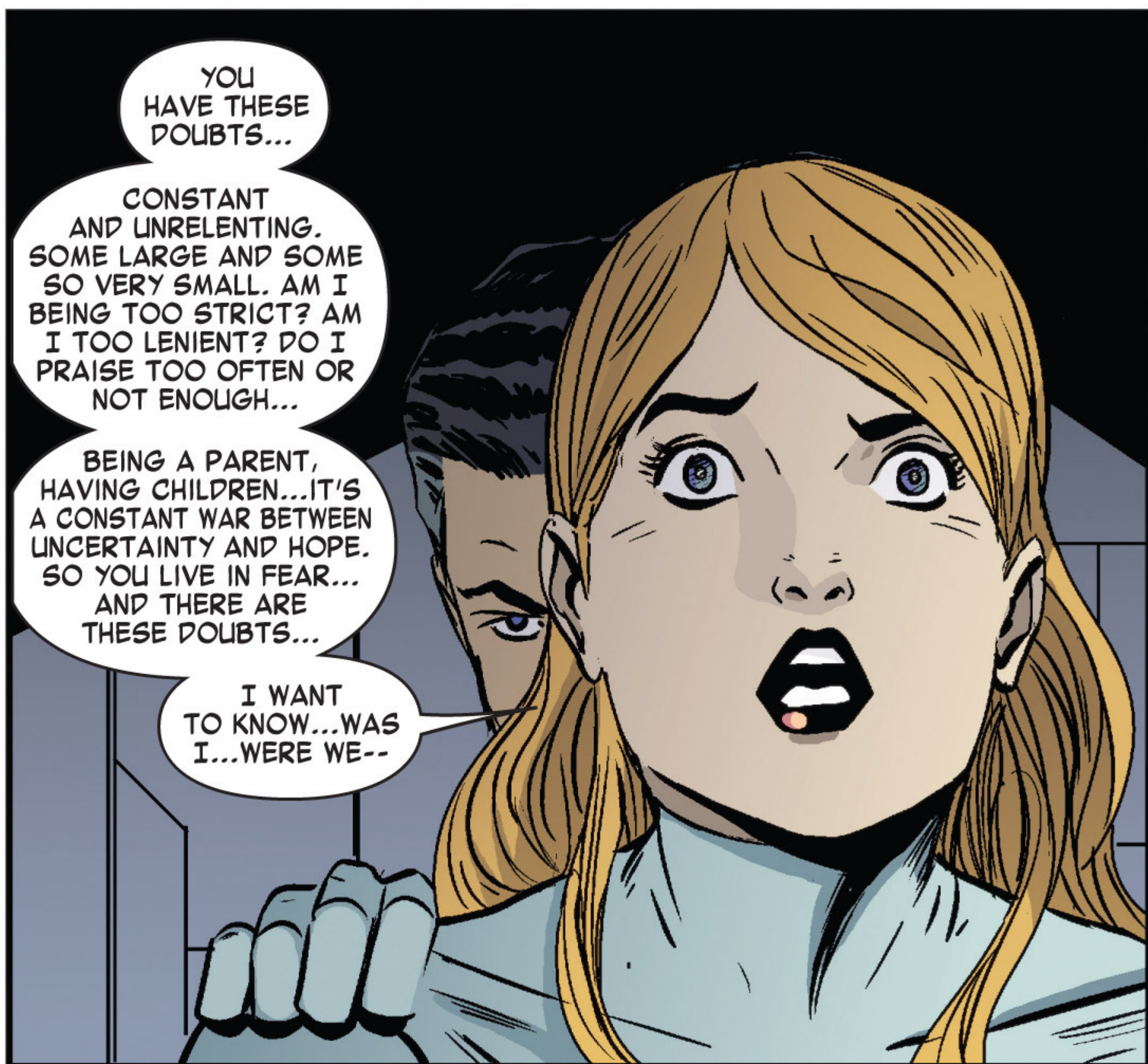


OKAY...IT'S
TIME. I WISH I
COULD STAY...BUT,
WELL, I JUST
CAN'T.

I'LL MI--

WAIT!

YES?



YOU
HAVE THESE
DOUBTS...

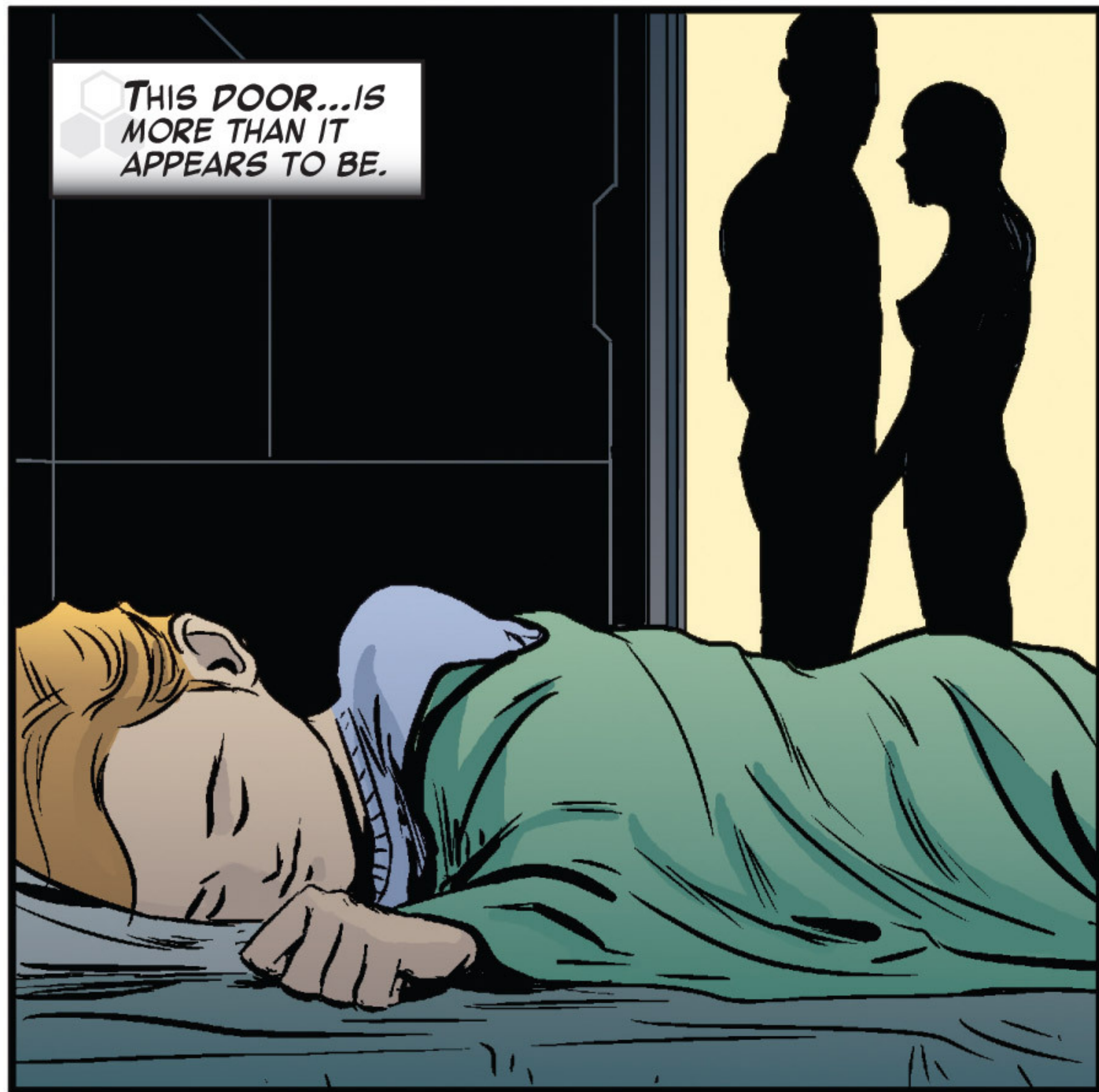
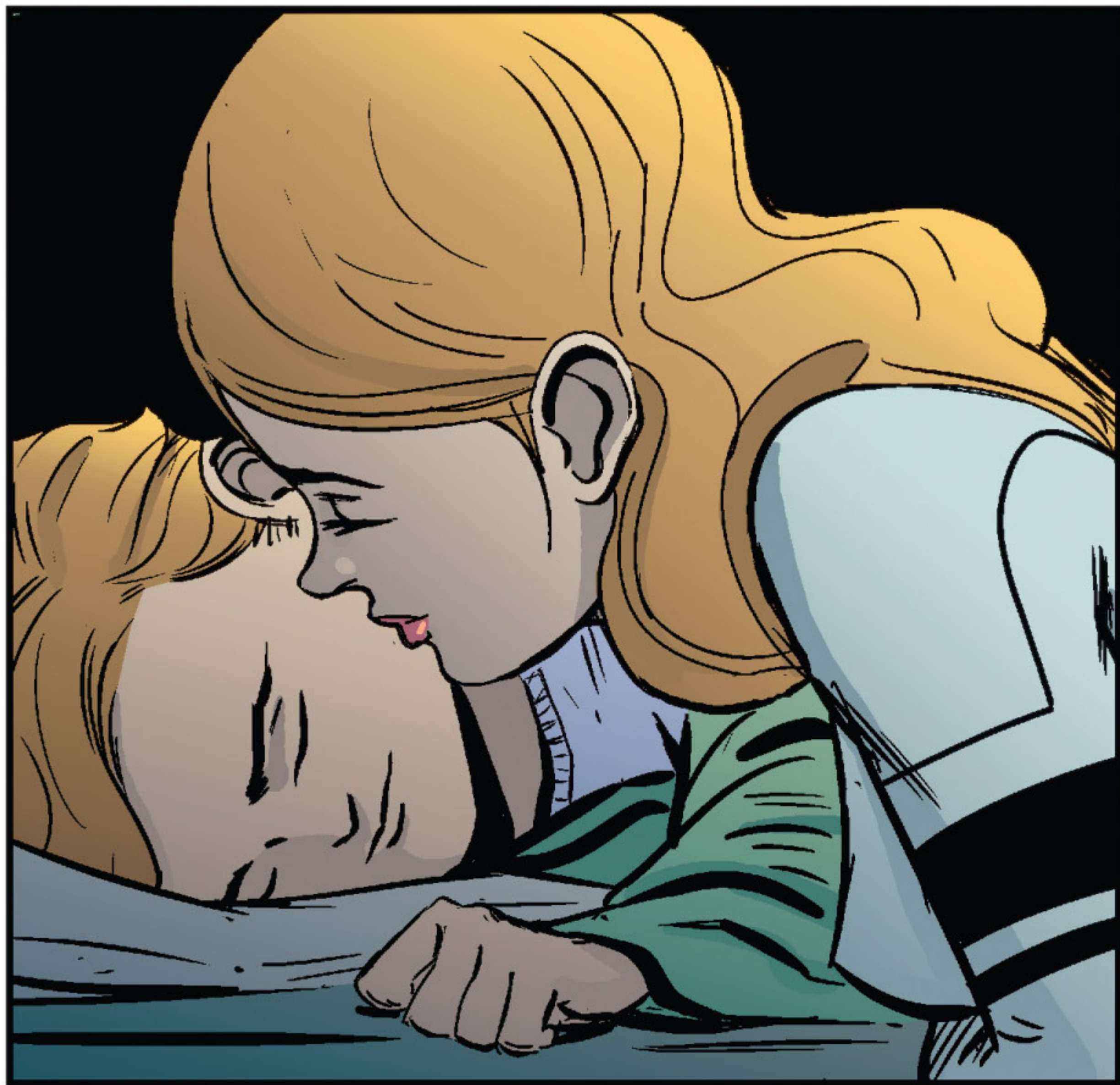
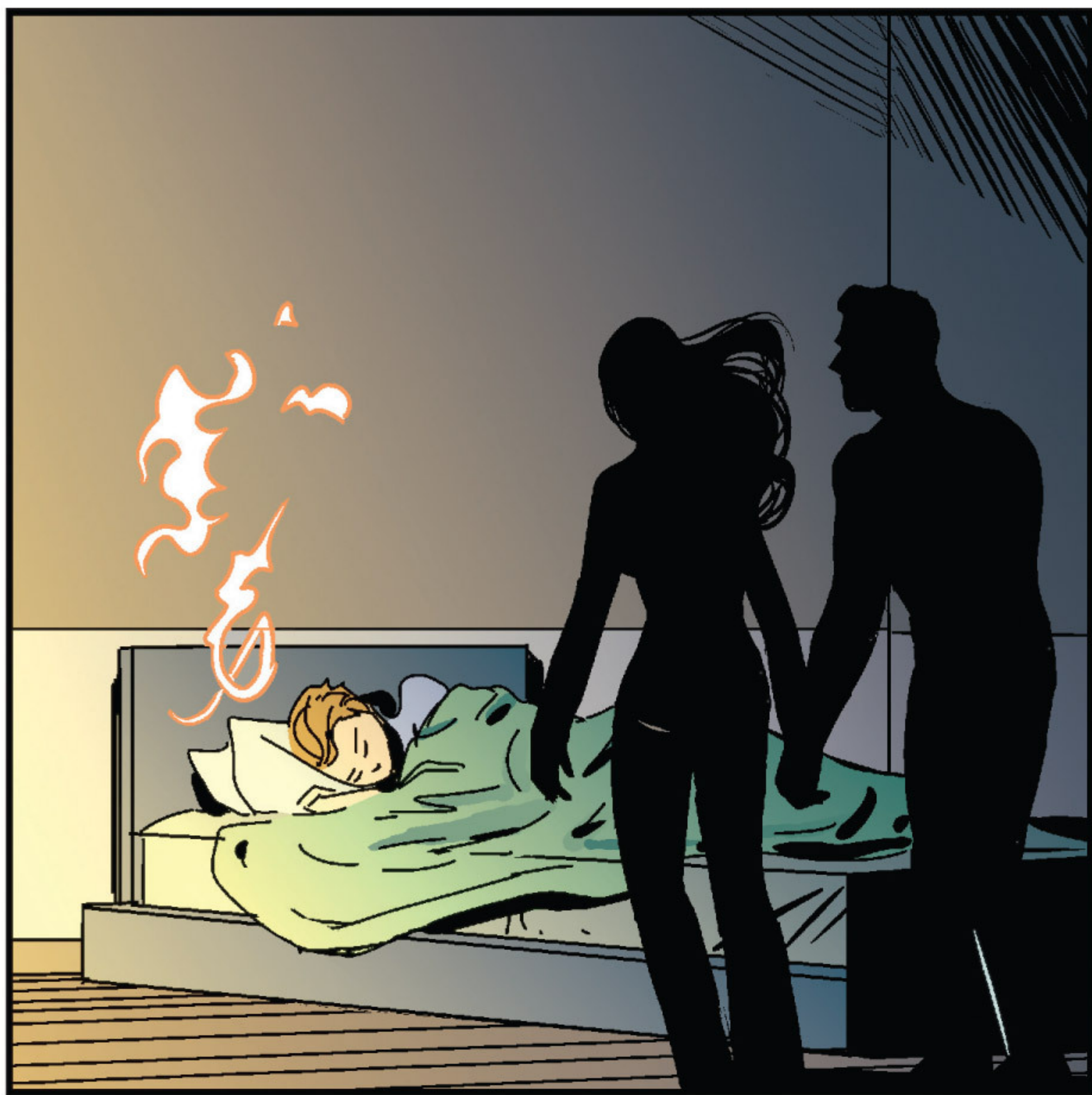
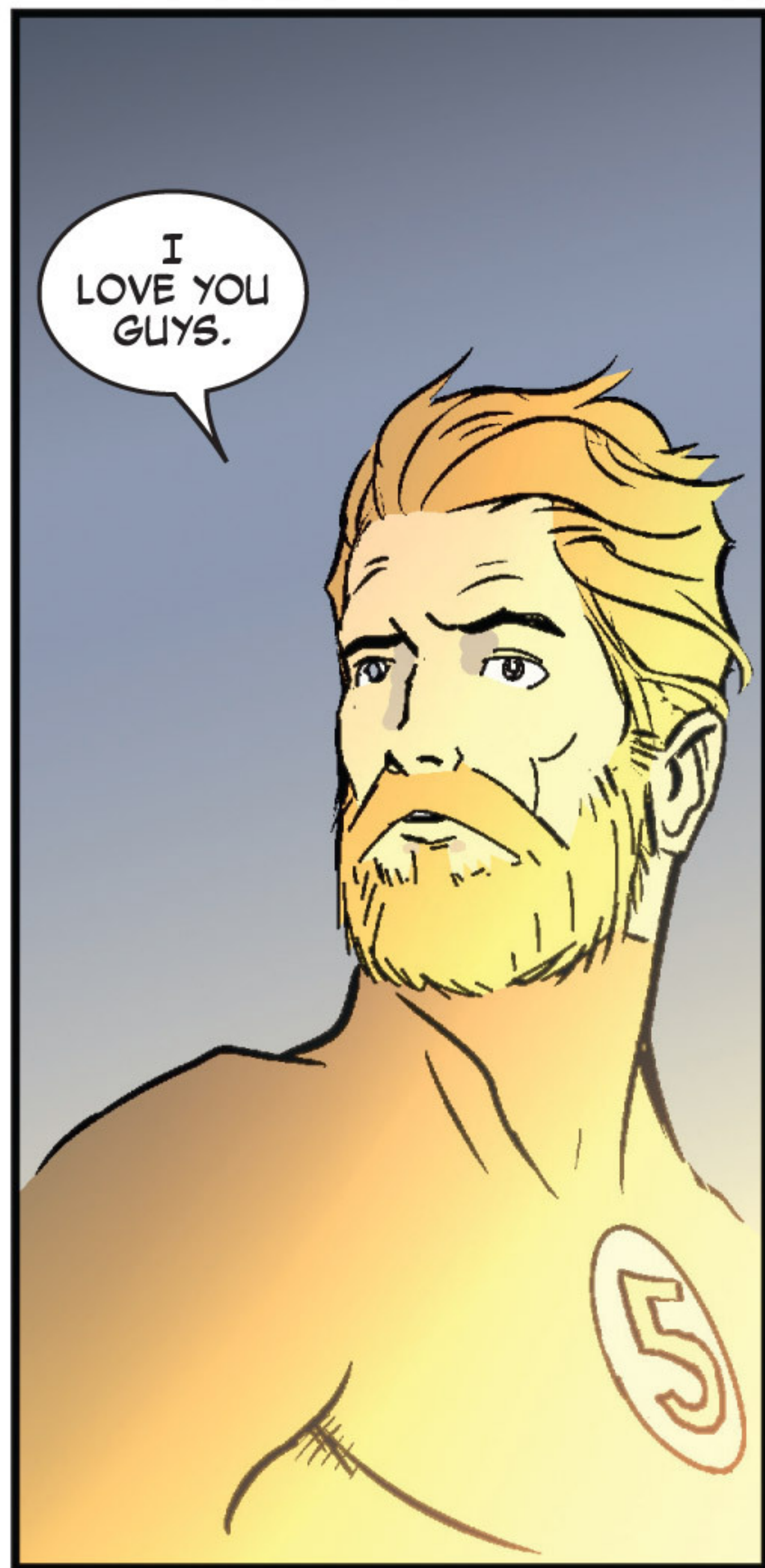
CONSTANT
AND UNRELENTING.
SOME LARGE AND SOME
SO VERY SMALL. AM I
BEING TOO STRICT? AM
I TOO LENIENT? DO I
PRAISE TOO OFTEN OR
NOT ENOUGH...

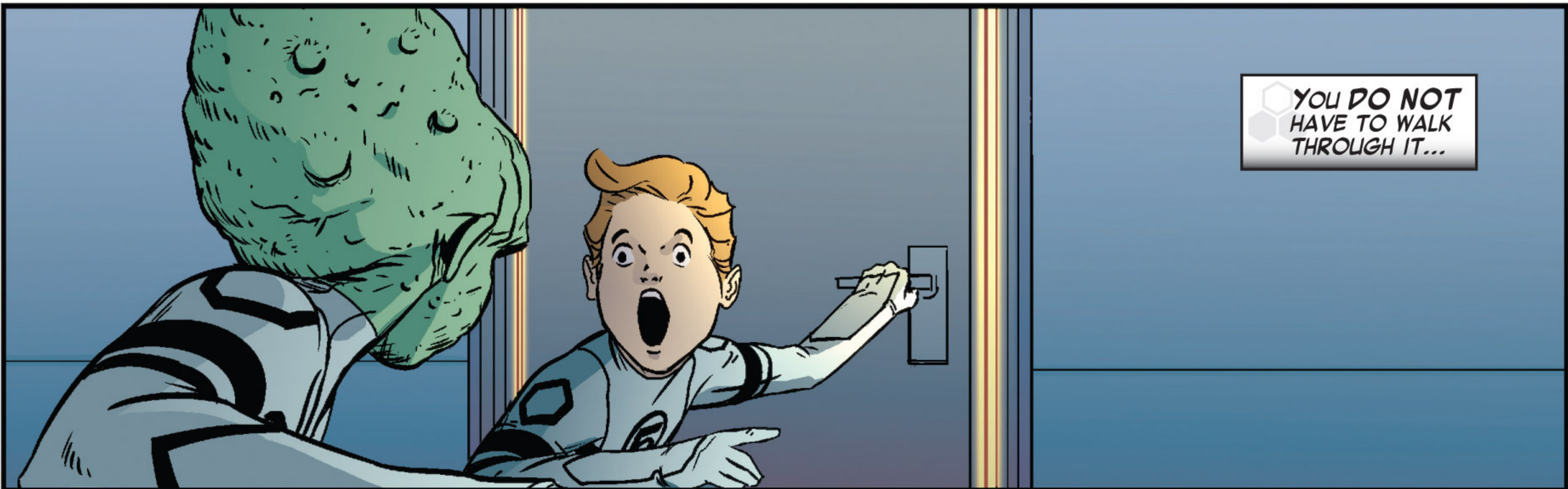
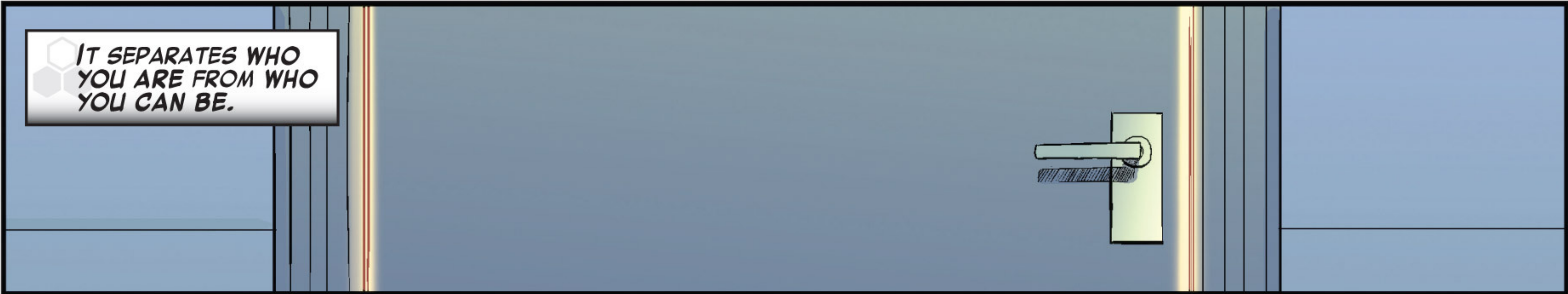
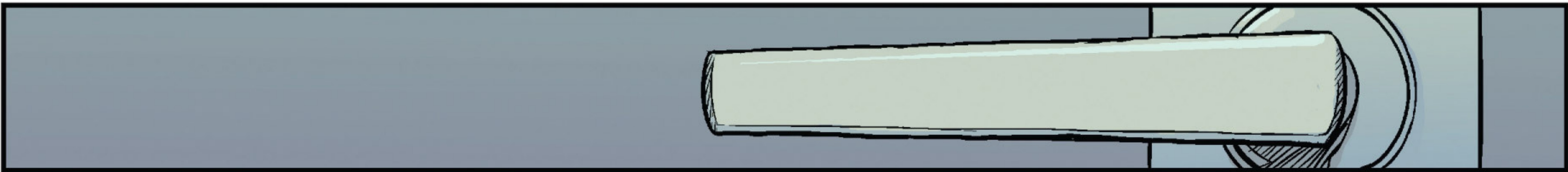
BEING A PARENT,
HAVING CHILDREN...IT'S
A CONSTANT WAR BETWEEN
UNCERTAINTY AND HOPE.
SO YOU LIVE IN FEAR...
AND THERE ARE
THESE DOUBTS...

I WANT
TO KNOW...WAS
I...WERE WE--



DID WE
DO A *GOOD*
JOB, SON?





FANTASTIC FAN PAGE 4

I still remember how disappointed I was when I found out my boss, Tom Brevoort, wasn't going to put "THE WORLD'S GREATEST COMIC MAGAZINE" tagline on the cover of my first issue of FANTASTIC FOUR. The dispassionate, analytical side of my brain understood it, but I swear to God and I do mean Jack Kirby, the hopeless romantic in me was crushed. Just CRUSHED.

I don't think I've ever asked Tom whether he did this to reflect a more realistic (read: honest) sales or market status, to maybe lower expectations, or if it was meant to challenge me, but, regardless, clearly the job -- My first BIG JOB at Marvel...my first FRANCHISE gig -- came with an unwritten rule: Get 'IT' back.

And so we did.

As I sit here writing this, thinking about everyone that has worked on the book over the last few years, I'm blown away by the efforts of everyone involved. Neil, Mark, Barry, Greg, Carmine, Ming, Farel, Leinil, Mike, Ryan, Juan, Ron, Cammo, Gabriel and André were all amazing. Our franchise colorist, Paul Mounts deserves special recognition as over this period of time he became the person with the longest tenure on FF ever. And the run simply would have not been the success it was if not for Dale Eaglesham, who kicked up a fuss right at the start, Steve Epting, who masterfully illustrated our biggest, most important moments, and Nick Dragotta, who perfectly rendered some of our most emotional stories. Special thanks, of course, to Tom and Lauren, who carried us through. What a team.

One final thought before I say good night.

I was giving an interview about the book sometime after we'd gone from critical darling to critical success and I was asked, "What did we do to make Fantastic Four relevant again?" I remember consciously lying and giving a generic answer about effort and storytelling meeting hard work and dedication or some other garbage because I had promised myself that never during the run would I talk about, or reveal, any of my 'rules' for the book (and I still won't), but I do now want to at least answer the question honestly. So here goes...

The world sucks. I'm not saying this as an anachronist or idealist, but one of the reasons for this condition is the expectation of family as a thing of permanence is dying. Which is actually what makes the Fantastic Four so interesting, they exist in opposition to that -- they are a perfect family in an imperfect world...and they represent the hope of what COULD BE. The franchise became relevant again because we tapped into this in a way that resonated, and, even more importantly, the driving force behind it was something we could all understand. Wasn't it?

After all, what was it that made Reed choose his family when he should have chosen utopia? What made Johnny sacrifice himself and what brought him back? What broke an unbreakable Ben Grimm and then found a way to make him whole again? What made Susan strong enough to stand when the others fell? What made Nathaniel always come home, and what was it that made Val and Franklin sacrifice everything to save their father?

It was Love. Boundless, unconditional, to the end of time and back, lift you up from death itself, LOVE.

And what's not fantastic about that?

It's been an honor.

—JH

As always, if you've got an opinion to share, you can e-mail it to us at MHEROES@MARVEL.COM. Be sure to mark your letters as "Okay To Print!" if you'd like to see them featured here on the Fan Page!

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